



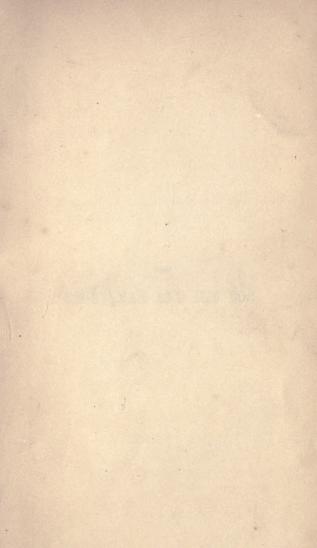
STANSIER STANSIER

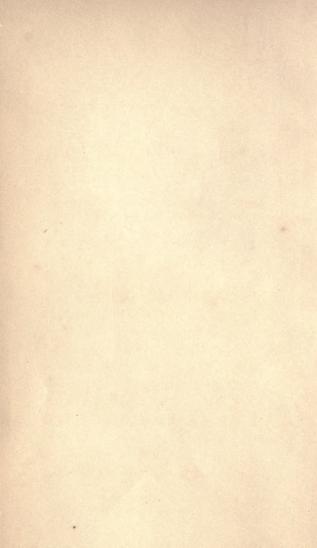


THE LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

PRESENTED BY
PROF. CHARLES A. KOFOID AND
MRS. PRUDENCE W. KOFOID







THE

SPORTSMAN AND HIS DOG.

LONDON:
Printed by Schulze and Co., 13, Poland Street.





SPORTSMAN AND HIS DOG:

OR.

Wints on Sporting.

E.J.L.J. Blaze

EDITED

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SCOTTISH SPORTS AND PASTIMES,"
"SPAIN AND THE SEAT OF WAR IN SPAIN,"
ETC. ETC. ETC.

by H. B. Hall

LONDON:

JOHN AND DANIEL A. DARLING, 126, BISHOPSGATE ST. WITHIN.

MDCCCL.



B63

CONTENTS.

				Page
The Sportsman and his Dog .	•			. 1
Taking the Field				4
Make Ready — Fire				. 15
The more Haste the less Speed .				27
The Wind and the Walk .				. 40
The Hare				48
The Partridge			•	. 70
The Pheasant				95
The Woodcock		• 7		. 105
The Wild Duck				117
The Snipe				. 127
Chance Game				132
Intrepid Sportsmen				. 140

M312881

CONTENTS.

The Selfishness of Sportsmen	Page 147
Necessary Precautions	. 154
The Theoretical Education of Sporting Dogs .	162
The Practical Education of Sporting Dogs .	. 173
The Trickery of War	184
The Sportsman's Nightmare—The Gamekeeper	. 191

THE

and the same of the property

SPORTSMAN AND HIS DOG.

When on a visit some years since to one of the most noble-hearted of English Noblemen, and I may truly add one of the best of English Sportsmen, at his romantic Shooting Castle, situated in one of the most beautiful of the Highland glens, the subject of conversation turned on a French Sporting Work written by M. E. Blazé, entitled Le Chasseur au Chien d'Arrêt. At the period to which I allude, I had neither the time nor inclination to peruse the book, and was, consequently, unable to give any opinion as to its merits as a Sporting Work, or of its general interest to the reader. Circum-

stances, however, which would be uninteresting to the public, induced me some months since to recur to the subject of the book in question, which was most kindly forwarded for my perusal. I therein found so much excellent matter as regards the truest natural history, and such thoroughly good sporting notions, intermixed with so many amusing anecdotes so well and so piquantly told, that I humbly ventured to translate the whole into English, with the assurance that such portions of it as may not be acceptable to the experienced sportsman as a matter of interest, could not fail to be so to the inexperienced, who will gain therefrom abundant and excellent information, from which he will be enabled to put theory into practice.

To M. E. Blazé, who I sincerely trust still lives and sports, I have only one apology to make, viz. that my pen can scarcely convey to the English reader a faithful opinion of the merits or the ability with which this work is written, inasmuch as it is almost impossible for any translation to embrace the numerous interesting anecdotes with which

it abounds in the same witty and pleasing style of which his own language admits. The fact, however, of its having found a translator who is most truly devoted to field sports of every kind, and that that translation has been admitted among the pages of the most widely-circulated sporting work in the most sporting country of Europe, must be a pleasing proof to him of the interest and value of his work, and I have only to add, in his own words :- " Et ce n'est point un livre ordinaire : il vous enseigne l'art de vous amuser; il vous donne un plaisir de tous les jours; la joie, le bonheur, la santé dans ce monde, et par-dessus le marché la vie éternelle dans l'autre : c'est ce que je vous souhais."

TAKING THE FIELD.

"Enfin ce jour pompeux, cet heureux jour nous duit."

CORNEILLE.

At length the sun rises on the long wished-for day: all is ready. The law permits war against the partridges. The hare, quiet in her form, which believed itself in peace with man, will see that peace was only a truce, which truce is ended. Ah! how many unfortunate partridges and rabbits will this day quit the delightful shade of the clover for the burning air of the kitchen! How many quails, on the wing for Africa and Asia, will find their intentions frustrated! Alas, having fattened themselves, the better to withstand the chances of the voyage, their plump and yellowed breasts will serve to satisfy the sensuality of gourmands! God created them to be eaten

at the second course, and they submit to their destiny. Some, wanting taste, dare to eat them at the first; but I shall in a moment prove to them it is a grave error; in the meantime be careful not to imitate them.

An amiable philosopher, M. Anthony Deschamps, put to me the following question: "Do you believe that man is permitted to kill a partridge?" "Unquestionably," said I, "in the shooting-season, having a license, and on ground where none can dispute his right." "You do not understand me: I ask you if you believe that, notwithstanding the three conditions you have named, man is justified in destroying a partridge, an animal which God has created?" "Most undoubtedly: but on the condition that he eats it also." "You believe, then, one may fearlessly eat a partridge?" "Certainly, when cooked to perfection."

Pythagore, bishop of St. Peter's, said otherwise: I am aware of it; so much the worse for them; they ought to be pitied. Listen to me: I admit the dilemma: either we ought to eat partridges, or they should

eat us; that is the question from which you cannot escape. As each year they have fifteen or twenty young, remain ten years without destroying them, and their numbers will equal the wasps or mushrooms: then adieu to your corn and oats, your barley and your grapes. Therefore partridges must be eaten, or horses be shot. Eat partridges, those who love claret; and, if only for the simple reason that we cannot live without bread, they must be eaten.

This right of eating partridges comes from a higher power. God said to Noah, "You shall be master of all the animals," (manui vestræ traditi sunt), which means that the animals are given to your hands, necessarily that your hands should put them in your mouth; therefore, eat all you like. Man was not made to feed on grass, his canine teeth sufficiently prove it.

The Bishop of St. Peter's was a first-rate fellow, but he had little taste in culinary matters. Let the world talk, but eat on: added to which one thing is positive, that if all were listened to, none would be eaten.

The moment your dog has discovered you dressed in your shooting-jacket, and has scented your gaiters, he is well prepared for the events of the day. Behold the joy which brightens in his eyes: he jumps, he rolls, the earth flies from his paws: like the battle-horse who hears the trumpet sound, nothing equals his impatience. This picture is your first delight. Start, then, for your dog will be ill if you go not.

The most favourable hour to commence is with the departure of the morning dew. The herds are yet in their stable, and have not disturbed the game. The scent of the night is still fresh, and your dogs will find it more readily.

If you go to your starting point on wheels, never do so in company with loaded guns: when they are in question, a thousand precautions are not out of place. When you arrive, then load as soon as you like.

If your gun have a detachable breech, nothing is more simple than to introduce your cartridge and prime it. There are also self-priming guns made by Refaucheux and

Reniger. But, concluding you to possess a gun with a ramrod, it is necessary to load it.

Previous to undertaking this important operation, it is indispensable to put half a charge into each barrel, then fire it in the air without wadding; this is termed "flashing the gun." Should any little dirt have introduced itself into the barrel, the explosion will drive it out. Should it be too large to escape, your gun will snap: then take off the nipples, and recommence the operation. Immediately after, without blowing into the barrels (as some sportsmen have the bad habit), introduce your charges of powder, one in each side. If in the heat of action you put two into the same barrel, this will easily make itself evident by the height of the ramrods, as, having secured your wadding, it will on one side naturally be higher than on the other, when it will of course be necessary to draw it. It is often dangerous to fire a double charge; and the least which can result is a box on the ear, for which you will only have to thank yourself.

Every sportsman has his own system with

regard to the quantity of powder and shot which he uses together. It would be a great error to suppose that a stronger charge would give one a greater chance of success. An old proverb tells us it is as well to be "chiche de poudre et large de plomb;" and the Spaniards repeat, "Poca polvera per digones hasta la bocca." Nevertheless it is as well to fall neither into one excess nor the other. With regard to the powder, the state of the atmosphere should influence your determination. It is as well that every one should try his gun with different charges. That of which the result is the most favourable at forty paces will be found the best. When you have successively tried every charge of powder, with all degrees and quantities of shot of different numbers, then select the hest

Having previously made all these trials and preparations, and found the exact portion for the charge in your powder-flask, charge your gun. Put a wad in each barrel, and ram well down twice, as a soldier does at his exercise. Nevertheless it is as well

not to force your wadding too much, as the powder overpressed does not so readily ignite, and the recoil is stronger. Then pour in your shot: fix it well on the wadding, either by striking the but lightly on the ground, or the top of the barrels with your hand; then ram home your other wadding, not with too much force, but sufficiently to well secure your shot.

Some sportsmen content themselves with forcing the wadding on the top of the shot without ramming it. In this they are wrong, inasmuch as the slightest movement of the gun from the weight of the shot may remove the wad, and it escapes altogether.

At the commencement of the season you may use No. 8 or No. 7 shot; later, No. 5 and No. 6; and at the end, No. 4. The smaller the shot the less it scatters, and the less distance it carries. The ordinary distance for 7 and 8 is from twenty to thirty paces; from thirty to forty with 6 and 7; and from forty to fifty, 5 and 6; from sixty to seventy may be attained with No. 4. There are occasions when you may kill at

far greater distances than the above, but in such case you must put it down for hazard rather than certainty or good shooting. Should you fire beyond the distances I have named, let your sight be longer or higher; this is necessary to obtain a chance of success. We are not writing a philosophical treatise, consequently I shall not submit to you the laws which regulate the escape of the shot from the gun. Neither you nor I having time to consider the causes, we must content ourselves with the result.

The shot will be sure to scatter if it be not of equal size, and round: it is therefore necessary to examine it well when you buy it. When purchasing shot, should I hesitate in regard to the number, I always buy the lowest; that is to say, the least shot, for it carries the best. You miss frequently at a long shot, but you are repaid at a fair distance. Believe me, the compensation is always to the advantage of a sportsman. With deer-shot a partridge may be killed at one hundred and fifty paces, but thirty following will be missed with it at twenty. Some sportsmen,

to the number of which I belong, are in the habit during the autumn of charging each barrel with different-sized shot, taking the near shot with one, the long with the other.

Be cautious not to put on the caps previous to loading your gun: this operation should be performed afterwards. The cap being fixed prevents the air forced down in the loading from escaping, and the nipples being filled with air do not admit of the powder entering. Having fired a shot, take the precaution not to let fall the hammer on the side which you have not discharged, and on all occasions when loading be careful to hold the barrels as far as convenient from your head.

Having loaded one barrel, never leave your ramrod in the other. A single shot may fix itself between the ramrod and the barrel, thus preventing your withdrawing it. This want of care once caused me to lose a splendid day's shooting, and I returned alone with an empty game-bag,

[&]quot;Honteux comme un renard Qu'une poule aurait pris."

Should both your barrels be discharged, always load them together. If, in order to gain time, you load one only, it is possible that several shot may fall into your empty barrel, and thus, when you load it, your gun may snap; which will necessitate your drawing the charge, by which you will lose more time than you have gained.

When you have only fired one barrel, it may be as well to slip the ramrod into the other, which will secure the wadding, as the shaking caused by loading not unfrequently loosens or displaces it, by which serious accidents may be caused.

During the month of September, when the weather is very warm, your barrels become much heated after firing several shots: you must then diminish the charge, which nevertheless will have a greater effect than the ordinary one in cold weather. If you do not take this precaution, the violence of the concussion will be so great that your gun will of itself return to the half-cock.

The strength of the powder may be augmented by the sun, which dries up all the damp particles. This principle once understood, during wet weather it is as well to increase the charge.

As a general rule, when you make use of the drawing-rod, invariably take off your caps; it is not sufficient to lower your cocks: at times the ramrod offers resistance: you cannot withdraw it yourself: you call a friend to your assistance—one pulls the rod, the other holds the gun. In this "pull devil, pull baker" position, a twig or branch of a tree touches the cock, and raises it to the half-cock; it requires scarcely as much to fire it.

Having loaded, see that the powder has well entered into the nipples. Should this not be the case, shake in a few grains, put on your caps, fix them well by letting down your cocks: you are armed: move on.

MAKE READY-FIRE.

"Le chasseur prend son tube, image de tonnerre; il l'élève au niveau de l'œil qui le conduit; le coup part, l'éclair brille, et la foudre le suit."—Delille.

BUT I allow myself to be carried away by my subject. As yet we have not fired our first shot, and I have already detailed accounts of well-filled game-bags, from which dead partridges fall as billiard balls rolling from the horn of abundance daubed as the sign of a billiard-room. This digression, caused by some happy recollections, will reanimate your hope, and you will forgive me.

You have started, your dog precedes you, a bird gets up unawares; do not fire; you will miss it; and a repetition of such events will disgust your dog, who may possibly leave you.

One of my friends, inexperienced as he was, begged me one day to lend him a dog. Now you should lend neither your wife, your horse, nor your dog; but I, who am blessed with a greatness of soul quite uncommon, exhibited my magnanimity to the extent of entrusting Medora to his care; the illustrious Medora, the best of dogs,

" Quo non præstantior alter,"

to range, point, and bring fur or feather. My friend started; an hour elapsed, when Medora returned alone to his kennel. Soon afterwards my sportsman arrived. "Your dog left me." "I am aware of it; he told me you missed five or six shots running." "It is true." "By heaven, I was certain of it. A dog hunts for his pleasure far more so than for yours. Amuse him, then, if you desire he should return the compliment."

I have not forgotten that as yet you have never shot either hares or partridges: wait till your dog stands, it will not be long first. Let him alone, do not talk to him; follow in silence, he knows more than you do. He is here—there—sinks—then raises his nose to seize the scent which the wind conveys: he stops, his position becomes serious—your game is not far off. The dog reflects, calculates, advances with precaution; he chooses the spot, so as to place his feet without noise, extends himself, and points.

When you have had some experience, you will ascertain from the position of your dog the species of game to which he stands. For a hare, the tail of the dog is generally very stiff, and slightly curved towards the end; inclined and straight for a rabbit; a slight degree elevated and straight for a quail; and, lastly, when very stiff, very straight, and parallel with the horizon, it is a partridge. For birds found in the marshes, such as snipes and rails, the tail of the dog makes slight movements from right to left, which may be said to infer uncertainty.

As yet, however, we have not arrived at this crisis. Your heart beats with violence, your breast heaves, you breathe with pain: do not choke, be calm: the weather is hot—the game will hold to the point you have plenty of time. Assure yourself in this manner: "The game is very near me: in order that my shot may be effectual, I should fire at thirty paces; I have then time to prepare and to take good aim." Recollect, if you fire at fifteen paces, you have less chance than at twenty-five or thirty, as it is only at such a distance your shot can have good effect; nearer it will be too much balled. If you kill, you destroy your bird, and moreover you must take much better aim to touch it; whereas at thirty paces, should you fire below, or even on the side, the bird will probably fall

All this thought over, reasoned on, and calculated on, place yourself in such a position as to prevent the sun shining in your eyes; when this precaution is not taken, two disagreeable results are sure to follow: the one, you invariably miss, or you hit by chance; added to which your

eyes become so dazzled it requires some time to recover yourself. All appears red or blue, and the trees seem to dance before you. A partridge takes the colours of a parrot, and, without doubting your aim, you fire three paces from it.

Good! now you have turned your back on the sun, advanced a foot, then two, the game rises. Be prepared, place your gun firm to the shoulder, take a steady aim, and touch not your trigger till the bird is in a straight line with your eye and the sight. But, above all, do not be in a hurry; you have far more time than is required: rather let it fly ten paces further than fire by chance: you have missed your first shot, increase your hope of the second by a better aim.

Nothing falls: the game is off, unharmed save by fear; your dog looks at you and recommences his work. You missed both shots because you were in too great a hurry: your gun was not sufficiently firm to the shoulder, which causes two serious inconveniences; it vibrates, and causes an

uncertain shot, sent by chance through the air, added to which the recoil gives you an unpleasant blow. I perceive, also, that your right cheek is a little red, which is disagreeable, but it does not dishonour you.

Recollect, in order to be well prepared, you should elevate your right arm as much as possible without inconvenience, the elbow being more elevated than the shoulder; the result is that the hollow or the but of the gun rests there, finding a better support than were the elbow lower. For one shot which you miss from having fired too late, there are twenty so missed from firing too soon. Shots are also often missed from a desire to see too much of your game; that is to say, you obtain too good a sight, and fire above it. You should aim at the centre of your bird, and never see more than half of it when you pull the trigger.

Walk on: commence again, — recollect your lesson, and if you follow it only once a fine partridge will repay you.

I did not deceive myself: down goes one; you are all alive—your dog runs for it. "Bring!" ought to be your only call—your only word. He well knows that his business is to bring it; but in order that he should not forget his duty, remind him always. At the same time mark down the rest of the covey—we must look for them.

Having your bird safe, caress your dog both with the voice and the hand. This animal is most sensible of kindness, as also of chastisement. He should remain at your feet while you load. If you allow him to range at will, he will put your game up when you are not there to shoot it. When I say your dog should remain at your feet, I do not infer that he should approach or caress you: these endearments may cause a shot which remains for you to rise, and more than one sportsman has regretted the neglect of this precaution.

Young sportsmen have at times the detestable habit of firing both barrels at once into a covey of partridges which rise under their feet, and that without taking aim. I have even seen those who were in such a

hurry that the ends of their barrels were actually close to the birds. This habit is vicious, blameable, and abominable: it is the surest manner not to kill, but possibly to wound several, who die far off, or are the prey to vermin. Having once succeeded in killing, and having picked up three or four birds with one shot, they hope to succeed again; but you may bet ten to one that in firing this way you will kill nothing.

A good sportsman selects a right and left shot in the covey, probably two separated from the otlers; aims at one, then the other, kills them both, and lets the others off, with the intention of meeting them again—

"Je vous en avertis, Vous viendrez toutes au logis."

And it is not without the best intention that I advise your aiming at the birds separated from the covey. If you fire at those in the centre, their neighbours may go off wounded. At all times, when two birds cross, it is as well to fire at their meeting

point, if they have not met; or, if you discover their mutual intention of approach, keep your eye on the void which separates them, and the moment they meet pull your trigger: thus I have killed doubly-double shots. But this is a rare occurrence, only such as arrives on fortunate days, such as the Romans noted with a "white stone."

In sporting, as at écarté, or any other game of chance, you may have your good luck and your bad—on some days every thing goes well, on others quite the contrary.

Be satisfied with the consequences without desiring to divine the cause. Besides, we are not likely to discover it—it is one of the thousand riddles of the world.

Continue your walk. Here we are in a field of potatoes—your dog ranges actively: all at once he stands firm, his nose straight, his paw elevated; he remains like a statue, in the position he had when moving. His tail is stiff, a trifle arched below; his seriousness is imperturbable; he is altogether at his work, be you at yours.

Every thing denotes a hare: look beneath that tuft, she is on her form there, and safe from the rays of the sun; she has chosen the best position for shade and comfort—she never dreamt of a gun. Unquestionably you might destroy her point blank; but we are sporting, not committing murder: moreover it is a question of learning, and not the desire of having a hare in your bag. By and bye I will explain to you the circumstances which may permit you to fire under the nose of your dog.

Walk on: the hare starts; aim well, and fire, but not in a hurry. Allow your dog to do his work: should the hare be wounded, her pace will be retarded, she will be taken; if not, your dog will return when satisfied that pursuit is useless.

When a hare runs straight, your aim should be between the ears when you touch the trigger; if not, you run a risk of wounding or missing her. A sportsman should not satisfy himself with breaking the leg of a hare or the wing of a partridge: when he has a fair shot, his game should be

dead. At a long shot it is another question: it is then excusable to wing a partridge or wound a hare.

When a quail is on the wing, then more patience is required. The quail flies straight, and more slow than a partridge. When it rises, you have time to take a pinch of snuff and kill it; you must even be careful not to fire the moment you are ready, or have taken aim, or your bird will be destroyed. Let him fly, and do not fire less than twenty-five or thirty paces off. A good shot never misses a quail which rises from the point of his dog. This is the pons asinorum of the sportsman.

As for a rabbit, it is far more difficult. They start from bushes, do not run straight, but make many zigzags, and it requires much practice to knock them over well without a good aim, and I will pardon you all the shots you may miss. But the bushrail, the king of quails, which rises at your feet, stretches out his long hanging legs, and gives you all necessary time,—the ease with which these good and innocent birds

are killed, always leaves me in surprise that any remain.

The pheasant rises majestically—he shows a bold front to your aim; but the noise which he makes astonishes those who are not accustomed to it. Beginners always miss them: they hurry too much—they lose their heads, and, really, not without excuse. You must recollect that his tail is not a portion of the animal, and that the rear-guard often saves an army.

This lesson often repeated will bring you by and bye to the best results. Practice will do the rest: soon with much coolness you will see your dog at the point,—a hare will start, a partridge will rise, but the pleasure will be always the same. And tell me if, in regard to all other things, you can say the same?

THE MORE HASTE THE LESS SPEED.

"Mon chien bondit, s'écarté et suit avec ardeur
L'oiseau dont les zéphirs vont lui porter l'odeur:
Il s'approche, il le voir, transporté mais docile,
Il me regarde alors et demeure immobile.
J'avance, l'oiseau part, le plomb que l'œil conduit
Le frappe dans les airs au moment qu'il s'enfuit;
Il tourne en expirant sur ses ailes tremblantes,
Et le chemin est jonché de ses plumes sanglantes."

YESTERDAY you killed a partridge; little, you will say, for the first day. It is much if you took good aim at it, and were not assisted by chance. Let us begin again: from the haste with which you have risen this morning, and the care which you have taken to prepare all your appointments, I see you wish for nothing better; you have the desire, which is necessary to succeed in all things.

Let us walk at forty or fifty paces one

from the other, but in the same line, that our dogs may beat, without stopping, the space which separates us: should any game rise suddenly, let nothing take off your attention—fire! to-day you ought to be inured. Be all eyes and ears in walking, as ready as you were yesterday when your dog was at the point; always thinking that a bird is about to rise, always prepared to fire.

You will miss frequently, but I am there to back you; and our dogs will return with something in their jaws.

Look at this partridge I have just killed; you ought to have saved me the trouble, as it rose under your feet. You fired too soon—your gun was not well to the shoulder: had you hit your game it would have been destroyed, it was only ten paces from you when you touched the trigger.

I have already warned you not to be in a hurry—I shall repeat it to you unceasingly. A young beginner should be preceded by a man carrying a board on his back, on which is written in large letters, "Do not

hurry." It often occurs to me that he would be of much service.

You may tell me this does not always depend on yourself-such is possible. I am aware that a partridge may cause the best resolutions to vanish. You lose your head-this I can understand. Listen to me, I will give you some good advice. Do not load your gun: when your game rises, place yourself in position, aim well at it, follow it with your eye; you are certain not to kill it, consequently you can act with coolness. When you have your bird well at the end of your barrels, fire the cap. Do this during several days; then load your gun with powder only, and begin again. The conviction that nothing can fall to your shot will soon accustom you to fire with a more dangerous weapon, and you will not have to regret the result. I know some excellent shots who served this apprenticeship.

Unquestionably it is no agreeable recreation to walk over fields with an unloaded gun. A sportsman thus equipped may be

compared to a life-guardsman armed with a harlequin's wand; but if you hurry again I shall be obliged to come to this extremity. No imprudence. Let your lock down on the cap: had I not been with you your right hand would have been in danger, and probably your face. I am aware you have two hands, but, recollect, only one head.

The whole secret of arms is in giving without ever receiving. This is what I was one day told by my fencing-master, M. Sourdain—that is to say, do not accept yourself the load reserved for the partridges. If a gun goes off on my side, pay no attention to it; as I offer a larger surface, I can receive the shot: in which case, farewell my lesson; it is for your interest I speak.

Good! now you go into another extreme: instead of hurrying, you do not fire at all. That partridge at which you aimed was not too far off, never was bird at a better distance. I was glad to see your barrels follow it in the air, but I desired a result—more was wanted, you should have finished by killing it.

You saw that covey of partridges which have just alighted in the clover: move on, take the wind, and as we walk listen to me. The covey are in force. The captain and lieutenant are at their head; that is to say, the old birds are there to direct the manœuvres of the young ones. Let us commence with the former: once deprived of their leaders, the soldiers will disband; those fellows give them bad advice. Our dogs are about to stand: it is hot, and the birds will hold. At the commencement you will aim at the old bird which rises on your side. If you kill it, fire your second barrel at another; if not, another shot at him. Above all do not fire at chance-aim well; do not be in a hurry, and fire. This is the time to show courage. Recruits are frightened at the first cannon shot.

The noise made by a covey of partridges rising at your feet has far more effect on the nerves. Do not laugh, you will soon tell me some news of them. I, with all my experience, am not even yet quite cool. My respiration becomes painful, and I al-

ways feel glad when the crisis is over. Walk on in silence.

Bravo! two birds at one shot, two partridges crossing one another, the point of meeting admirably seized. Young man, you may be satisfied. A bright future opens for you. I see an uninterrupted succession of well-filled game-bags. That shot shows me you will be a sportsman. In such manner Buonaparte, before Toulon, announced to the world Napoleon of Austerlitz.

Do not run to find your birds; allow your dog to do his work; it is his duty to bring them—it is his pleasure rather. Look where the others have gone. Well! two in the sainfoin, one in the stubble, the remainder in the hedge-row. We will pay them a visit; each shall have his turn, they shall lose nothing by waiting.

Begin by the single bird. A partridge alone is a dead partridge. When they are in covey, some look out, others listen, and the fear of harm tells them of the harm they fear: they are off before the danger arrives. A single bird down does not move, but allows the dog to stand to it. You must understand, however, that such are among the number that have not already been fired at: when they have, they become more wary; nevertheless, at all times, a single bird is far more easy to kill than when in company.

After those which we have seen drop in the stubble, we will take a look for those in the clover, and thence to the hedge-row. In fact, we will follow them as long as any remain, or, at least, as long as we can find them on our own ground.

You have fired into the hedge-row, your dog seeks a fallen bird and finds it not; the partridge is not dead, but has only a broken wing, and he runs. He is incumbered, in which manner he often gets far away: you must then take your dog to the place where the game has fallen; let him scent the spot, saying to him, "Seek, seek! bring it!" and the moment you are certain, by his precipitate movements, that he is on a right scent, let him do his work, and do

not interrupt him. If you walk after him you may, perhaps, put up other game; and if you fire, the noise of your gun will bring back your dog, who will no longer listen to your voice.

Soon you will see him return, all joy, with a living bird in his mouth: then is the time to caress him, flatter him, and say pretty things to him; he will understand them well, and you will be repaid. His tongue is powerless, I am aware, but his tail possesses an eloquence which many R. A.'s may covet.

Yet if the ground is dry, the weather very hot, the nose of the dog has no longer that extreme nicety of smell which he possesses when the weather is fresh. The sun absorbs the scent of a partridge, and your game is lost; do not blame your dog: it is not his fault; he is more taken in than you.

There is still another way of finding your bird. When returning in the evening pass by the spot where you wounded it: it is probable he may have rejoined his companions, who are not far off. He is in their centre; each one tells of the fatigues and dangers they have encountered: his is the longest story, who has left several feathers of his wing in the battle, which he survived by flying.

Approach the covey; fire, or do not fire: those who are well will be off, but the wounded one will remain: let your dog find him, he will soon be a prisoner.

On every occasion that I pass by a spot from which I have seen a covey of birds rise, I wait a moment, and cause my dog to hunt; and often, above all in the commencement of the season, I glean something. These are little profits which ought not to be neglected.

All that I have said in reference to partridge shooting applies to the quail, the hare, and the rabbit. The lesson resolves itself into this: place your gun well to the shoulder, take good aim, and fire without being in a hurry. In the chapters that we shall devote for each species of game, I will endeavour to explain all the modifications relative to firing under every circumstance.

An essential habit, which ought to be observed when one follows with the barrel, as regards crossing game, whether on the wing or running, is not to hesitate at the moment of firing, as neither a hare nor a partridge will stop, and consequently you fire behind them. It is, therefore, necessary to accustom the hand to follow your game with a uniform movement: this is indispensable to become a good shot.

In shooting often you become a good shot—practice will soon accustom you to see a bird rise suddenly with coolness; you will no longer be in a hurry, and firing without hesitation your bird will fall into the jaws of your dog, without your being able to explain to yourself how such an operation was effected.

The prompt shot at game which gets up at a long distance in a wood is often very extraordinary; one has only a second or two to make ready and fire: a moment longer, and your object would have been out of sight. Very well! This calculation is made by the glance of the eye; your gun

to the shoulder, the shot is fired and your bird dead. Practice has done all: your arm, your eye, your finger, have obeyed, you not how or why. A mechanical movement has operated. This object you have achieved the moment you conceived it. When you desire to write a note, you write it; this appears simple enough. Nevertheless, how many thoughts are required to write this word! In the first place, thought must conceive it; the letters which compose it are presented to you in their natural order; you have written one after another, with their accents, their turns, their points, their apostrophes-all this is done without calculation-mechanically, and the word is written.

There are those, to practise themselves in partridge-shooting, who shoot owls in the day-time: it is a useless murder—murder, because the owl only does good in eating the millions of insects which devour us; useless, because you may shoot fifty owls following and miss all the partridges you find. That which constitutes a good sports-

man is quickness of action: this promptitude, this certain glance of the eye, which causes him to seize the occasion in a hair'sbreadth—the occasion once lost which may never again be found. The Romans represent it running on the edge of a razor and flying as a bird.

"Cursu volucri, pendens in novacula."

They had reason: the partridge, the quail, all species of game, resemble it. You must take advantage of the moment, once gone, never to return. In like manner can shooting owls be like that of game? They go, they come, they come again—a hundred times—a thousand: you take your time, you aim, you fire only when they are at the end of your gun. You select the moment, and this moment lost, returns in a minute. You may have better practice by throwing up sparrows from your hand and firing at them in the air.

As with partridges, you must select your time—and it will cause you no inconvenience to destroy a few of these really quarrelsome birds—but as regards the owl it is positively a crime to kill them.

Nevertheless, a sportsman may hit many a sparrow and miss a partridge, though they show a better front. The noise which the latter make when rising astonishes and unnerves, and some time is required to accustom yourself to it; and we know that a young actor who plays well at rehearsals loses his head or forgets himself before a paying pit.

THE WIND AND THE WALK.

"Pour être bon chasseur, il ne s'agit pas seulement de savoir bien tirer, il faut encore savoir bien chasser."

Begin by taking the wind; that is to say, should it blow from the north, walk toward the north; if from the south, to the south: you will soon find the disadvantages of not following this method. Two great annoyances will be caused therefrom: the game will hear the noise of your footsteps, and your dog will hunt without scent. The contrary will be the case if you feel a slight breeze in your face. This conveys to the nose of your dog the peculiar scents which emanate from the hare or the partridge. Like the miner who follows in the earth a vein of ore, the dog follows this line of invisible atoms, and traces out your path.

It is not the distance you walk, but the manner in which you seek your game which secures sport. Explore all your ground: leave none untried.

You have beaten with a good wind a field of lucerne: should another join, do not commence it without taking the wind: rather return to that you have tried, in order to commence the new one with the wind in your favour. These marches and countermarches are always necessary, and often very useful: the hare, which has not moved the first time, starts on the second, and your trouble is repaid. When the field is large and long, take it at your ease, lengthways, returning always over the ground you have beaten, as it is useless to walk over your fields save you have the wind.

You may also cross and recross the field: in such cases you have always a side-wind. Where you have plenty of shooting ground, adopt this plan; if on the contrary, do not follow it.

In the latter case, you must economise, and not waste. Stop from time to time; be all eyes and ears. A sportsman who is always on the move may walk ten times

over a hare without its moving. regular movement of his steps is far from frightening it; but let him stop, and it is off at once. One can readily understand the calculation of a hare, that is to say, if a hare calculates. I believe it, inasmuch as La Fontaine says they dream. "The first steps have done me no harm, neither have the second; the others will perhaps have the same result:" thus reasons the hare. "They have walked, but I have received no ill: they do not see me. I will remain on my form: but they stop; I am then discovered. I was all right as long as they were on the move, not so when they stop." And away she goes.

You must not always rely on the nose of your dog: circumstances have occurred when the very best have passed near a hare without scenting it:—for example, when the weather is very hot or dry; if your dog has not had water for some time; if you are shooting in flowery clover or sainfoin—in this case the perfume which the flowers exhale neutralises the scent of the game;

when the slightest wind blows in a contrary direction at the moment that the dog passes near the hare: such have occurred to me; I have shot one after having beaten a field three times, although I had passed so near it that the prints of my feet were actually within a few inches of his nose. I question whether he was not in a devil of a fright.

When walking with a loaded gun, your hand should be on the small of the arm, and never near the triggers. A stone may cause you to make a false step, and off it goes; and it is as well to carry your barrels always slightly elevated, in order that your neighbours may not suffer from any such misfortune. Your gun should form an angle of forty-five degrees with the horizon.

If I endeavour to give you advice profitable to your companions, understand them not the less in reference to yourself.

Be careful of young sportsmen. If you walk with them, place yourself rather in the rear than in the front. These young-sters sometimes lose their heads at the sight of a partridge; a hare causes them a giddi-

ness; and a pheasant throws them into convulsions.

They fire always with little care, how or where: this is not agreeable to their neighbours; it is as well to be out of shot. As for myself, I never shoot so well as when I am alone. In company it is necessary to give attention to others, both for them as for one's self. If a bird rises, all wish to kill it; all are in a hurry, and all miss it. I have thus seen several shots fired at a hare, which has gone off none the worse.

He who walks most sees the most game. But you must walk well and with spirit; not saunter over the fields, uselessly frightening hares and partridges, and sending them on the property of your neighbour, where you cannot follow them.

A good sportsman, like an able general, studies his field of battle; the moment he has discovered his fields of clover or of wheat-stubble and fallow, his plan is formed; he already knows the shots he is likely to fire from the position of his ground: his eagle-eye has shown him the

advantage he is likely to derive from the immense potato-ground which will form the base of his operations. He shoots in a circumference towards the centre, penetrates the wood when it is well filled, and expels the game from the woods again into the open.

Imitate this sportsman, and each of his manœuvres will aid to fill your game-bag: quails and partridges will fall therein at every step: their agreeable weight will finish by being unpleasant, and will hasten your return.

Recollect a little the pleasure which this game has afforded you: first, in finding it; secondly, when it was found; thirdly, when the point of your dog has caused your heart to beat, and given you those delightful emotions which a sportsman alone can appreciate; fourthly, when you have fired and brought down your bird; fifthly, when your well-trained dog lays it at your feet; sixthly, when you have felt its weight on your back, as nothing is heavier than an empty gamebag; seventhly, on your return home, when

you proudly exhibit the amount of your success; and that your he-cook—for, alas! I have only a she-cook—admiring the hares, partridges, quails, and rabbits, meditates a sauce or prophesies a "gibelotte," prepares the bacon to lard the one, or cabbage for the other.

His experienced eye never deceives him. The quails are for the next day. The partridges will succeed them; and then come the hares and rabbits. As for the pheasants - oh, for the pheasants! - you must wait awhile: this is a subject which we must study and meditate on. It is necessary to consult the atmosphere, if it is hot or cold, if the wind blows from the north or south; these observations, made with thought, determine the day when the pheasant will embalm your dining-room with its delicious odour. Recollect, that a pheasant, killed the day previous, is not worth a fowl. Savarin decided this, and who has ever discussed the question with more grace, science, and amiability?

All these culinary preparations will furnish

your eight delights. Some sportsmen think little of the latter; I by no means agree with them. As regards myself, I can appreciate all things, and take advantage of the few joys allotted to man as I find them. This system generally answers, and I am tolerably well: imitate me, and when I have the pleasure of meeting you we will compare notes.

THE HARE.

"Lièvre je suis de petite stature, Donnant plaisir aux nobles et gentils; D'être léger, vite de nature. Sur tout reste on me donne le prix." Du FOULLEUX.

THE hare is sufficiently known by all the world; it is, therefore, scarcely necessary that I should amuse myself by giving a description, forasmuch as I am not writing a book on Natural History.

This animal breeds the first year: the female generally gives birth to two young, sometimes three, and even four. In the month of March, and even in February, as soon as the mild influences of spring are felt, the bucks pursue the females with incredible desire; their passion amounts even to rage, which causes among them such bloody battles as even to terminate by death. On one occasion I passed by the battle-field of two of these gentlemen, and saw with a shudder the fur of a hare scattered in the sun in sufficient quantity to make a muff; here and there traces of blood; the end of an ear torn by teeth only made to nip the grass: farther on a still breathing body. "See the dangerous effects of love," said I to my cook, "and make me a good sauce."

The first leverets are littered in February, the last in September. Should you find a hare to-day, if he be not chased by your dog, come to-morrow and you will find her near the same spot, or within two hundred yards. Should you kill a leveret marked on the forehead with a white star, seek again in the same place; her brother will not be far off. A leveret born alone has no mark.

The destiny of a hare is a strange one an enemy to none, yet are all the world its enemies—the wolf, the fox, birds of prey, man, and even the rabbit. The rabbit, risking the same dangers, yet seeks

to quarrel with her. Unfortunate! live in peace! the coverts are large enough, herbs are sufficiently abundant for both: be brothers from habit as you are from resemblance, inasmuch as your lot is the same, for the only difference I find between you is when on the table. If the hare has many enemies, she may always reckon kings among her protectors. In all countries there have been innumerable laws made in her favour; the sovereigns of all nations have signed them by dozens. How often have serious affairs been neglected for those having reference to hares! But these high protections were similar to those of a butcher protecting his sheep from a wolf. Lady Morgan, who was at times in error when speaking of France, spoke truly when she said that we estimated the life of a hare to that of the liberty of man.

When the weather is hot, the hare is almost always found on the borders of a clover-field, potato-field, or of covert, whatever it may be, where it is sure of protection from the rays of the sun. In winter,

on the contrary, she places herself in its heat, always exposed to the wind, on a bank, or in a fallow field. She selects any place of her own colour; she scratches the earth, and makes a form always in proportion to her size; and there this estimable animal sleeps; but she sleeps with her eyes and ears open. The hare, endowed with an extremely fine sense of hearing, passes her life in one continual fear. She starts with an extreme speed; her front legs, shorter than the hind ones, give her greater facility in ascending than descending; it is as well, therefore, when with other shooters, to select the most elevated ground, for she is sure to take that direction.

It is rare that a hare takes the same form two days running: she makes a fresh one each morning. This animal has much dislike to dew; she fears to wet either her feet or skin; for this reason she seeks for the cleanest and driest spots. Through woods and hedgerows she makes a path, which she always follows; should she find in that path any root or thorns, she gnaws them with her teeth. With a glance of an eye a sportsman will assure himself of the usual track of a hare.

It is easy to discover the sex of a hare on its form; the buck always keeps his ears close and firm to the side of the head; the doe, on the contrary, keeps them open and enlarged on both sides.

"Indivisa jacet mediis quando auris in armis,
Ille tibi mas sit: quando utraque pendet
Utriusque foemina."

The Abbé Daries, of Carniol, in the Basses Alpes, was a great sportsman. One day, at the moment of proceeding to his clerical duties, a peasant came to say that he knew of a hare on her form. The Abbé hastened through his service, and quitting his church took his gun. Arrived near the hare, the shooter said to his guide, "Turn her up; I do not murder my game." The hare is started, the Abbé takes aim, but fires not; the peasant is astonished. "Fool!" said the sportsman, "do you not see it is a doe, and she is heavy?" In the

same circumstances I entreat all sportsmen to follow the Abbé's example.

The hare does not see well before her: if she comes towards you, do not move, she will pass between your legs. A hare chased by my dogs, and wishing to escape from a garden, broke her skull against the fence through which she was about to enter.

I have often seen during a campaign three or four regiments disperse spontaneously, and, forming a large circle, surround an unfortunate hare; ten thousand men, many shouting, mixed like a swarm of bees at once. The hare being secured, each returning to his ranks, nothing more was seen but the poor hare hanging to a knapsack awaiting the night's bivouac, when the cook of the squadron transformed it into a savoury stew.

At the moment of being put up, the hare starts instantly, goes far, and does not stop until she has placed a considerable distance between herself and her pursuers. Nevertheless, it often occurs that she squats when passing through a covert. In such case, she makes no form; grass or herbs cover all that is necessary to hide her from your eyes.

The leveret is generally found in the centre of a clover-field, a potato, or a beetroot field, instead of being found on its borders. She has less confidence than the hare in the fleetness of her legs; she fears giving advantage to the dog; and instead of taking a direct course, she hides, stops often, changes her place without quitting the covert, from which she never breaks until the shooter is at the other extremity. From such reasons I conclude a hare should be sought on the borders, a leveret in the centre.

When a fresh form is discovered, or one that has been recently occupied; when the earth has been lightly scratched; when your dog makes false points, it is certain a hare has been there, close to you, and is possibly squatted behind a tuft of grass: walk, look out, listen, but do not speak.

The hare always follows a path, therefore

when your dog enters a wood, a hare is up, and he follows her; place yourself at the spot where several runs cross, and be assured the hare will pass you. This animal makes but one cry in life, and that is when dying. When she finds herself taken by man or a dog, it is the cry of the swan, —a most harmonious song to a sportsman. Having fired in a wood with uncertainty as to the result of your shot, this cry gives you an assurance of success, soon confirmed by the arrival of your dog, who brings the hare in his mouth.

The hare has much cunning: she swims well; followed by hounds, she will even cross a river. I have killed the finest and oldest of hares between the branches of a willow, she being squatted there to deceive the dogs.

Should snow have fallen during the night, hares are very easily found: you may follow their tracks, which lead you to the form. This, however, is only successful on the first day, inasmuch as on the second there is crossing and recrossing, destroying the pos-

sibility of so unsportsmanlike a manœuvre. A hare will frequently cross and recross her own track solely to destroy it; she will then make a jump of ten paces, and lying closely down, will keep herself concealed.

The snow is a period of destruction and terror to hares: the poachers destroy them in incredible numbers. At the same time a true sportsman is not desirous of snow; he looks on it as a calamity, inasmuch as after a severe winter he finds, in the following September, an enormous reduction in the number of this game.

After a white frost, or when snow has fallen and the sun shines brightly, an experienced eye will discover afar off a slight smoke issuing from the earth: it is the evaporation from a hare's form; it is the vapour which is thrown from her body after running; it is a chimney in miniature. In order to discover this smoke, the sun should shine in your face; it will otherwise not be observed. In this instance, as in all others, when you know a hare to be on her form, do not walk up to her quietly, with a hope of sur-

prising her, as the hare is always listening, and the more precaution you take, the more surely she will deceive you. On the contrary, you should walk up to her quickly, describing a circle as you approach, which you lessen as you come nearer. You should sing if you be alone, talk loudly if with companions, and have the air of going on your way merrily. The hare believes you unoccupied with her affairs, and remains at home.

On all occasions when you traverse a fallow or a stubble, and that you observe a slight protuberance, you should approach to see if it be not a hare on her form. You may often take many useless steps; you will often be disappointed by a clod of earth: but a sportsman should take little note of his steps or his difficulties. The quail or the partridge should be allowed time on the wing; but at the hare, fire when you can: the moment she is in a straight line with your aim, fire. In shooting at her when near, it gives you time for a second barrel

should you not have been successful with the first.

The Abbé Daries, of whom I have already spoken, was on a shooting party in the Basses Alpes. Arrived at their shooting quarters, a storm commenced, which lasted three days, during which time they were necessitated to remain within a wretched cabaret or road-side inn. At last the sun appeared superb and brilliant; all were disposed to start, but the Abbé refused to accompany them. "I know you young men," said he; "should I kill anything, you are very capable of eating it, notwithstanding to-day is Friday. In such case I should be answerable for your sins, and I have quite enough of my own." As the Abbé was the best shot of the party, they listened to what he said, and promised to keep the fast. This decided the question: they started, and commenced shooting. A hare got up under the feet of the Abbé, at which he took aim, but his scruples appeared to return with all force, as he did not

fire. He was heard grinding his teeth, and, still following the hare with his barrels, he exclaimed, "Ah! if it was not Friday! Ah! if it was not Friday!"

A hare which gets up straight before a shooter, and which runs straight from him, should be aimed at from the centre of her back to between the ears: in this manner the shot covers the whole body, and she falls like a cork drawn from a bottle. Should you fire at her rump (I apologise for this expression), you rarely kill her. The rump of a hare is a bag of shot. A sportsman prevents the trick, which every day verifies by experience. In effect, the shot which strike the rump do not count; they remain without diminishing the vigour of the animal. Turned by the flesh, they have not sufficient force to break the bony part; and in such case you lose your hare, save that some shot should break a hind leg, or, passing above the back, strike the head or the remainder of the body.

A hare which crosses you is more readily killed when hit; but not, as some think, so easily hit. In fact, when she gets up straight before you, you have only a line to follow with your aim; far or near, the shot always takes effect; whereas, when crossing, it is necessary the shot should strike exactly at the point that your line of aim is crossed by that followed by the animal. If you hit, it is in the stomach, the heart, or the head; and the hare is dead. In this manner, a hare you fire at when crossing at fifty paces is as readily killed as a hare going from you, supposing the shots to be equally well aimed.

Should a hare come direct towards you, fire low, at the front legs; should she return on seeing you, fire high, at her head; if she crosses you, at the shoulders.

When a hare is on her form in a field, or in an open covert, fire at her when you have started her; but if in a wood, from the point of your dog; and if the thickness of the wood or bushes prevent your having a fair sight, fire at what you can see of her sitting. This is termed murdering or smashing a hare. Take aim at the head, because in such case, as she is probably near you, you destroy any part you hit; and if the head be lost, the inconvenience is of no importance to your cook. And, on the other hand, the head resists, and is more easily pierced; whereas the body, covered with fur, is in such case gifted with a certain elasticity, which not unfrequently prevents the shot from entering. I once shot at a hare on her form within twenty paces, which left on the seat a handful of fur, and the beast still ran.

When the earth is frozen, a hare on her form in a fallow is not easily killed if you fire at twenty-five or thirty paces. Her body well down shows no face, and clods of earth are always at hand for her protection. These clods in ordinary weather would be broken by the shot, which still would hit the hare; but hardened by the frost, and like stones, they resist and turn off the shot, and the hare runs, to be shot at another day.

The hare knows twenty-four hours beforehand the weather that it is likely to be, and that without the use of a barometer. When starting to shoot, examine always closely the weather. If it rain, or is likely to rain, look for hares in springs, stony places, in those covered with herbs, roots, and generally in dry places out of the wind; above all, if the wind be from the south. If in the north or east, the hare will care for it only on the two first days; on the third she no longer fears it, and takes her form with her nose to the wind. I have made this observation a hundred times.

When it freezes, hares are always to be found in the woods, in coverts, and in hedgerows. Those found in the open are exceptions to the rule. They are often so merely from circumstances, having been disturbed by sportsmen, dogs, or others. In all cases when you have fired at a hare, let your dog follow her: if you see that the hare loses in her distance, you should follow and put your dog on the scent, if he loses it. When you judge further pursuit useless, whistle and recall your dog.

Always pick up your hare dead; kill her

should she still breathe. I have seen them escape even from the jaws of a dog.

In Germany, sport may still be said essentially to belong to the aristocracy; consequently hares are far more numerous than in France. There was a period when all these hares belonged to us by right of conquest. This was the epoch when "glory" was so often made to chime with victory. Plains of Erfurth, of Gotha, of Weimar! your delightful recollections make my heart beat even to this day! What well-filled game-bags have we brought from our excursions! We were young and indefatigable: no sooner arrived at a cantonment, after having marched seven or eight leagues, than we started to shoot, which fatigued us little. What do I say? Why, we sported when performing our duties, and shot while our regiments deployed on the highway their well-trained columns. We marched as sharp-shooters on their flanks, to protect the division from an attack of hares! That was the day of pleasure! The

gamekeepers, the foresters, all these gentlemen allowed us to pass with their hats off.

In days gone by, the right foot of a hare was presented to the king—this on your knee; more, it was a privilege which those who possessed it were not eager to cede to others. During a long period in France, many were termed "Knights of the Hare," who, not having the title of Knight, were desirous of bearing it. Let me tell you the origin of this title or of this by-name.

Philip of Valois and Edward III., king of England, were about to commence a battle, when a hare getting up in the centre of the French camp, the soldiers, desirous to catch her, caused a great tumult. Some officers of the rear-guard, fearing the King of France was in danger, rode forward to succour him, and for their expedition demanded from him knighthood. "I am compelled to refuse you," said the King, "because you would be called Knights of the Hare!"

It is essential, when you kill a hare, to

discharge her urine. In order to do this, hold her in your left hand by the ears, and let the thumb of your right hand press the extremity of her belly. Without this precaution, the hare will retain a urinous taste, and will be uneatable.

A hare killed and emptied when warm, cooked and eaten at once, is excellent. In shooting quarters I have often dined on a hare which lived an hour before. If you allow her to become cold and stiff, she is hard; and in such case she must be hung up several days before you deliver her to the experienced hands of your cook.

With a hare two excellent dishes are to be made; the fore-quarters make an excellent ragoût; the remainder goes to the spit: nevertheless it can only be so eaten at home. In all other cases, let her be roasted entire in her length, and not larded, as certain idle cooks have the detestable habit of doing. I engage those of taste to give three orders;—that she should be sufficiently done to be tender; not too much done, or she will be worth nothing; in fact, done to a

turn. A hare overdone is no longer a hare; she is wood—horn; she is flesh without taste or flavour, not worth the shot that killed her.

In order to ascertain if the hare be old or young (an essential thing to a cook), you should bend the paws of the fore legs to the knee. If the separation of the two bones is perceptible to the touch, she is young. A good hare is plump; her back is strong, large, and broad, but she is never fat.

The mountain hare is far better than those found in the low grounds; she feeds on herbs and wild thyme, and her flesh is perfumed with a charming flavour. Generally speaking, the drier the earth the better the hare. In Provence they are delicious, but rare. It is an event to kill one in that part of France; all are jealous of such luck.

I could never understand why Moses forbade the Jews, and Mahomet the Moors, to eat hares. Pork I can understand: in warm climates the flesh is unwholesome; but the hare is always good. The Greeks and Romans served her on their tables only on great occasions; and they have vaunted her efficacy in certain circumstances which I must decline entering into. Yet, while on this subject, Pliny tells us an old proverb of his time - "When you eat hare, you are handsome for seven days following." Seven days! this is not bad. Martial says, "Inter quadrupedes gloria prima lepus." The Romans were persuaded that the flesh of a hare preserved freshness and beauty. Ladies, then, eat hares; and, according to the precepts of Pliny, make your husbands eat them also. The Emperor Alexander ate hare at every meal. Among the Greeks it was the emblem of fear, and never was emblem better judged. According to their custom of deifying, they placed a hare in the rank of constellations. In fact, to say one word in apology for the hare, I will add that Lucullus estimated it infinitely. Lucullus-do you understand the immense authority of this name in practical gastronomy? It is to be regretted that history has not preserved to us the receipt of the sauce served to this gentleman. The most material points are ever precisely those which historians neglect. As, however, we have not the receipt adopted by Lucullus, permit me to give you that I use myself. Heretofore I ate hare à la sauce piquante. Since, however, I have done so with simple currant jelly, I have continued so to do without demanding the originator of this taste, and I recommend the same to all.

I will conclude this chapter by giving you a brief account of the finest hare-chase which exists in the memory of man. We were four hundred thousand men, French and Austrians. The above took place at a certain village named Wagram, a few leagues from Vienna. The plain was covered with hares; at every ten paces many got up before us. Our guns and cannons caused them much fright; they started, in the hopes of saving themselves; but at a short distance they met with two hundred thousand Austrians, afterwards beaten, little to their satisfaction. Then they returned; and you might see them running in troops between the two armies. A charge of

cavalry, in no manner made on their account, put them to the route; they pierced the ranks, passed between our legs: they were killed by the bayonet or the sword, or taken alive. Alas! that day we beheld a butchery of men and hares! A hare killed caused a comrade to be forgotten; it was the farce to the tragedy. How many balls intended for the enemy were fired at these poor hares! Never were so many seen, never were so many killed. That night, after the battle, conquerors and conquered supped together on hashed hare.

THE PARTRIDGE.

"De la perdrix entendre faut,
Qu'elle est lubrique grandement,
Et concert naturellement;
Par l'aleine du masle chaud
La perdrix dénote une femme,
Mondaine, lubrique, et charnelle,
Qui, au détriment de son âme,
Attire les paillards à elle."—La Sire de Gargas.

Partridges couple in the month of March; they lay in the month of May, at times in the end of April: about the 28th of June they fly: this is a fact which is proved yearly by experience. The moment the young are hatched, the cock and hen birds move in a body, which is termed a covey.

Unfortunately partridges make their nests in clover, grass, and sainfoin, often preferring the grass, because it grows more rapidly, and offers them shelter; but the mower arrives before the young are hatched, and thus the covey is lost. Alas! why have

not these interesting birds sufficient foresight to make their nest in the wheat-fields! Their eggs would not then be destroyed by the scythe, and we should have the pleasure of killing many another brace.

Some preservers purchase the eggs thus found, and place them under hens, and the moment the young are sufficiently forward to provide for themselves they are turned out in the wheat-fields. They start them by dozens in places where there are other coveys, and the new comers are soon admitted to the nursery of a new mother, who is vain of her augmented family.

Partridges, whose eggs have been taken by the mowers, sometimes make another nest with success, and which are termed relayers, but the young seldom become full grown. The month of September arrives before they are sufficiently strong to help themselves: the dogs catch them; and bad shots, who are incapable of killing a vigorous bird, blush not to destroy these unfledged ones! The wretches! They truly commit a crime, and can only be compared to a

coward soldier, who, in a town taken by assault, tears the child from its mother's breast in order to blood his sword, and give himself the air of a brave man. "I have cut off the arm of an Austrian at the battle of Wagram," said a recruit. "It would have been better to have cut off his head," said I. "Without doubt," said he; "but that was already done!"

All animals have much affection for their young; that of the partridge is in the extreme. Without ceasing she is on the watch; she listens, looks about her, and calls her brood, covers them with her wings, or flies away with them. But should they not be sufficiently strong to take wing, it is then her motherly instinct finds a method sublime. La Fontaine has, however, so well described it, that it will be useless for me to do so after him:—

"Quand la perdrix Vois ses petits

En danger, et n'ayant qu'une plume nouvelle, Qui ne peut fuir encore par les airs le trépas, Elle fait la blessée, et va trainant de l'aile, Attirant le chasseur et le chien sur ses pas; Détourne le danger, sauve ainsi sa famille: Et puis quand le chasseur croit que son chien la pille, Elle lui dit adieu, prend sa volée, et rit De l'homme qui confus des yeux en vain la suit.''

I have frequently seen this interesting family portrait; each year I have a similar pleasure; I have ever respected the mother and her young, and I should most truly despise the sportsman who without pity would kill a partridge under such circumstances. When the spring is wet, whole coveys are often destroyed; the water covers the nests, the eggs become wet, and the young die before they see the light.

"Ut flos ante diem flebilis occidit."

Hail and storms destroy many, notwithstanding the protecting wing of the mother. How many enemies, then, has the partridge of whom to avoid both the influence and the pursuit! In the first rank we must place the magpie. The magpie is the bird which destroys most other birds; his piercing eye discovers their nests in the midst of a hedge, in trees, and among the grass; he eats everything he finds, eggs and young; and then, when the partridge, either from luck or cunning, has escaped so many dangers, man arrives armed with a gun, preceded by his dog, and followed by the fatal turnspit.

Partridge-shooting commences only when the young have attained size, have quitted their first feathers, and are moulted. The same as in man, the right of man is understood by the law of honour, which all generals respect; so in sporting, certain rules exist which should ever be held sacred by a conscientious sportsman. To kill an over-young bird is to cut your crops green; it deprives you of a future pleasure if you commit a sporting crime: add to this, that it is useless, without taste, without flavour; it is thrown away, and becomes the portion of the cat. Still further, it causes you to be ridiculed, which is never pleasant, inasmuch as, having returned from a day's sport, when each with pride displays the fruits of his success, jokes and squibs fall on the head of the bungler and the murderer, and during dinner it serves as an addition to all the sarcasms of the merry circle. In addition to this, a very young bird does not count as a dead head. In the severe inspection which each makes on his neighbour's gamebag, if it be a question of the best shot, a half-grown partridge, a leveret, and a young rabbit, count for nothing. It is necessary to have game of good alloy, skin or feather; it should, at least, be in youth, but not in infancy. Its wings or its legs should discover this point. In this mutual control, essentially moral, the aim is to punish bad actions, and it is the best means to prevent their committal.

The red-legged partridge is far more difficult to shoot than the grey, because, instead of following a horizontal line, they mount in the air at an angle of seventy or eighty degrees. As this bird rises almost always on being fired at, it is necessary, in order to touch it, that it should be aimed at on the point of intersection of two lines. Add to which it flies faster, makes more noise, and surprises you the more. The

sportsman who fires at a red-legged partridge for the first time often misses it. This partridge is a noble and beautiful bird.

When shooting one day near Chenevièressur-Marne, I killed four red-legged partridges, which I presented to Madame P. at Nogent. Some days after, many jokes were passed on the subject, pretending I had purchased them in the market. These conjectures were grounded on the fact that they had all a green riband on the right leg, an ornament which partridges are not in the habit of attaching to the legs of their young. I knew not what to answer, as I had not seen the ribands in question. The following day I returned to the wood; a red-legged partridge got up and was killed. I examined it, and I found a green riband. I followed my sport: a double shot; a brace killed; two green ribands. I soon ascertained that the daughter of an illustrious field-marshal had nursed these interesting birds, and that she had thus marked them with the hope of finding them again: nevertheless we ate them: sic vos non vobis.

This recalls to my memory another anecdote. We were in Poland, encamped near the little town of Sochacew, about sixteen leagues from Varsovie. We were told that in a neighbouring forest there was an abundance of wolves, and all the sportsmen of the regiment started one fine morning for a wolf-chase. The dogs were thrown in: I placed myself; a wolf appeared within twenty paces; I killed her. Hélas! all the sportsmen ran to see; the wolf was a superb one, but she had only three paws; one of her front ones was wanting. "She lost the other at the battle of Eglau," said an old trooper. Another wolf was killed; we looked: she was similar to the first: her leg was cut off; the skin had grown over the wound; one might have believed her to have been so born. A third-a fourth, fell to our shots, and our astonishment doubled on each occasion; they had only three legs, and that wanting was invariably a fore leg. A wit of the regiment desired to prove to us that in Poland wolves were so born. Some began to wonder and be-

lieve, inasmuch as they could scarcely credit that four wolves should be all wounded in exactly the same manner. I wished to have my heart at ease on this point, and also to know the reason of so curious a fact. I, therefore, directed my steps towards the habitation of the forester, about two leagues from the place where we were shooting, and this was his answer: "The skins of our wolves are very valuable as a merchandise. In the spring we endeavour to discover the place where the female has deposited her whelps, and we cut off the fore leg of all the young females: the mother licks the wound, which soon heals. When the time of rutting commences, they draw from the neighbouring forests all the male wolves, as with three legs they wander less and remain at home, and thus we are plentifully supplied." This explanation appeared to me to be very satisfactory, and I astonished our naturalist when I proved to him that in Poland wolves, wishing to remain in the class of quadruped, had the excellent habit of being born with four legs as elsewhere.

Speaking of wolves when on the subject of partridges, I must admit, is rather an absurd digression, for which I ask pardon of my readers, though without promising not to fall into the same scrape should any similar sporting anecdote occur to me.

By nature the red-legged partridge is wilder than the common partridge. It is usually found in woods, on mountains, and among rocks, but is rarely met with in the fields. The sport of the former is incessantly varied; one mounts in the air, another plunges down a precipice: it is rarely two are shot in the same manner. In rapidity of flight no other game can bear comparison. It requires a good shot to kill a red-legged partridge under any circumstances. At times, from the moment it gets up till it falls, three seconds are allowed; not too much, you will admit. Advantages are, however, often found: these birds do not always rise together: the first gives warning, and you have time to aim well at its followers. Not rising together, they disperse more readily, and on meeting

with them a third time, you are almost always sure to obtain a shot. They run faster than the common partridge, but a good and well-trained dog, who follows through bushes, &c., ends by finding them down when he stands to the point, and you may approach without causing them to move, even be you a thousand paces distant.

Red-legged partridges change frequently their ground: you may meet with them on spots where you have never previously found them. When they are not where you expect them, it does not follow that they have been killed: they have departed; the spot has displeased them, that is all. In the neighbourhood of Paris these birds are not in their natural climate; and if exotic herbs are not to be found, for on these they exist, they would die. But they do better, they go elsewhere.

A sportsman who can readily kill a rabbit or a red-legged partridge is generally a bad shot at the common partridge, the hare, and the quail. He is in too great a hurry, and for this reason good shots in the covert frequently miss in the field. Covert and open-shooting differ materially, and an equal success is rarely obtained: nevertheless some are equally adroit and fortunate in all things; but these are of Nature's privileged class.

The common partridge may be found everywhere save in large woods. They are easily approached in woody spots, and where covert is found, such as hedge-rows, bushes, potato-fields, and clover. They sometimes run before the dog, who stops, points, moves again; makes another false point, then continues his beat. In such case I follow this method, which I suggest to amateurs. Should you follow your dog, the birds, which each moment improve their distance, rise beyond shot. You should walk then before your dog, causing him to remain behind you. Hasten your steps with as little noise as possible, and when you arrive at the end of the field, give a shout, and the covey will rise.

When a covey is found in the centre of a stubble or fallow, it is rare to approach them; they have their videttes to apprise the battalion, and are off at once. You should surround them, or rather walk round them, without approaching too near. The birds will run into some place for cover: leave them to settle for a minute, then take the wind, and walk direct towards them.

Partridges are very fearful of man, though you may easily come near them with a horse or in a cart; but it is necessary to do so by a zig-zag path, as though you were besieging a town.

In France a third species of partridge is found, but these are only in the south. It is similar to the red-legged partridge, but larger. When this bird sings, it continues its song for some time, and always in the same note; and for this reason it is called the "Bartarrelle," which signifies the songster of the mill. This bird has the same habits as the red-legged partridge, though probably still wilder. You require good legs and wind to follow it, as it is found always in wooded, mountainous, and rocky

places, and is ever moving from one spot to another. It follows a straight line, but the sportsman requires to mount and descend again and again; in fact, it is a kind of deer-stalking. In the countries where these birds are found it is the custom for several sportsmen to divide, each placing himself on a mountain-side, and in such manner a shot may be obtained by some of the party.

I have even heard of a fourth species of partridge, smaller than the others, and which is said to be a bird of passage. But I do not know such to be the case, neither have I seen one. At the commencement of the season I have carefully acquainted myself with all the partridges under my command, and have been well satisfied as to the strength of the coveys, but I have never discovered that any such birds of passage have augmented them. At times I have certainly discovered less birds, but never more.

The partridge, which in the months of

December and January is very wild, and flies afar when followed by dog or man, becomes tame in February: this is because the breeding time arrives, and the coveys are broken up. Should frost arrive, they again unite, to separate on the first appearance of fine days. Amongst partridges there are always more males than females; and those which are not coupled always make war against the fortunate husbands-not a rare case among our own sex. At times a hen bird is pursued by four or five male birds, who never give her rest, not even when she is sitting. It would be well in the month of March to make war against the cock birds. At the break of day, you should start with a hen bird in a cage, and when she calls, you will soon see several male birds arrive. You kill one, and the others are off, but shortly they will return and be killed also. To obtain their wishes they would pass through a brasier. A decoy-bird calls ordinarily only in the twilight. I know a keeper who has used a starling to attract

the cocks. This bird, caught young, was brought up among partridges; never had it listened to the paternal song. Like a parrot, it is a good imitator; it repeats that which it has most frequently heard, and repeats it so well that the cocks themselves are deceived. In this manner your sport may last all day. I have even known sportsmen who could themselves imitate perfectly the song of the hen bird when calling to the male. It is a rare talent, but nevertheless a fact.

Partridge-shooting, when the pairing season commences, should be followed in open day; they will hold to the point as in the month of September. The female bird rises first, then the cock, and you shoot the latter only. Very soon will the lady find a fresh husband. It is, however, only during the months of February or in March, and during the breeding season, that the cock rises last. When the month of April comes, the scene is changed; the cock has no longer desire, and he flies at the slightest noise. This may be termed the "coquet-

ting" of partridge-shooting. It is, however, a sport which should be very soberly followed. Kill here and there a male bird, and then look forward for the return of the first of September.

Partridge-shooting offers an unceasing variety. The easiest is when the bird flies parallel to the horizon. In such case you have only one thing to recollect; it is to aim straight at the centre of the body, and whether you fire a little too soon or a little too late your bird will fall: if it flies straight, the shot cannot fail to strike it. But if the bird rises, you may readily conceive it is not easily killed without the line of fire cut that of the flight at the precise point of the bird. The shooter should follow it with his aim, and not cover it too much, but rather to the contrary. It is better to fire too high, because the tendency of the bird to rise may throw it exactly in your fire. Should the partridge plunge down the side of a mountain or gravel pit, aim at the legs, and the shot will strike the centre of the body. Should it come straight towards you, and your gun is on a level with it, aim at the head. Should its flight be on the rise, aim a few inches before the head. If it flies very rapidly, and is aided by the wind, aim two feet before the head. The time which elapses between the shot fired and striking is brief, but that occupied! in passing two feet by a bird on the wing of fear is not long. Should the bird describe around you a spiral line in rising, you must turn with it without changing your place: Do not be in a hurry; aim well at the body, and don't pull the trigger till you are well assured of hitting your bird. In such a case a second shot is rarely successful. They call the shot of a king that which a sportsman fires over his head in a vertical position.

He should aim at the head, or six inches before it, or more, according to the height of the bird. To succeed you should not be on the move. Such a shot is far more difficult when taken by surprise; no time is allowed to prepare the legs or arms.

When your shot is fired and the bird

falls, it is either dead or wounded. Then cause your dog immediately to seek it. Should the partridge rise suddenly in the air, it is mortally wounded either in the head or heart. Follow it with your eye, it will rise, rise higher, pirouette, then fall like a stone. This frequently takes place at some distance from the shooter. He ought, from the moment the bird comes to the earth, not to lose sight of it. You should well observe some intermediate points exactly in the direction, such as a tuft of grass, a clod, a stone, and thus assure your mind as to the place where the bird will be found, saying to yourself, " Not farther than that tree, not nearer than that bush." Then walk on and seek. Previous to quitting the straight line, in order to search on the right or left for your bird, mark well the spot you have quitted in order that you may be enabled to return to it, having not been successful. Notwithstanding all these precautions, I have lost many birds in this manner. In the centre of cultivated ground it is difficult to judge your distance. When

the weather is hot, your dog has no nose. Add to which it requires so small a place to hide a partridge.

The male of the red-legged partridge is known by certain small protuberances which appear on each foot; that of the common partridge by the chocolate-coloured horseshoe on the breast. The first of October passed, partridges are full-grown. A sportsman should be easily able to distinguish a young from an old bird. The one should be roasted, the other committed to the stew-pan. Cooks often are deceived, yet all men of taste know the worthlessness of an old partridge roasted. When emptying your game-bag they should be divided; the individuals destined to the spit, and those intended for a purée, or stewed in cabbage, and who figure in the first course, should be pointed out to them. The experienced sportsman well knows a young from an old bird. In the former, the last feather of the wing, which terminates in a point, instead of being rounded, is the colour of the feet, namely yellow; whereas that of the old bird is much darker. And with regard to the red-legged partridge, the young bird differs from the old, inasmuch as the second feather of the wing is transparent at the extremity. If you look at it in the light you will see an opening appear in two distinct lines.

A sportsman would always prefer a rcdlegged partridge to the common bird. It is a much finer bird, more difficult to kill, larger, and fills your game-bag sooner. But a gourmand ought to prefer the common partridge. Many may think this a heresy gastronomic, having always heard to the contrary; and having believed it, it is painful to get over a long-rooted opinion. I am well aware that in the market the redlegged bird sells at a higher price than the common one, and that the restaurante values it at fifty to a hundred per cent higher; but all this proves nothing. I have made the experiment twenty times at my own table. The two birds have been served together. Some distinguished friends carefully tested their separate merits, and the common bird has invariably received an honourable verdict in its favour, as possessing more flavour, juice, and taste. Try yourself; forget your ancient prejudices. "What beautiful feet! what beautiful plumage!" will go for nothing in the judgment you will pronounce. These things are not eaten.

Partridges are said not to be easily digested. It has also other inconveniences. You shall see:—

"Nimirum crudam si ad læta cubilia portas
Perdicem, incoctaque agitas genetalia cœna,
Heu! tunc effundis semen, nec idonea pulchrum
Materies fundabit opus. Siste ergo per horas
Saltem aliquot," &c.

Certain gourmands pretend that they are enabled to distinguish from taste the thigh on which the partridge sleeps, and say it eats better and that it has more flavour. I have often seriously endeavoured to make this trial, but I have never been enabled to discover any difference. I, therefore, conclude there is some fault in my digestive organs, which have not all the sensitiveness.

they ought to have. It is a most delicious dish a well-roasted partridge; but it is necessary that the nice leaf which well incloses his plump body should not permit the escape of any of its juicy flavour.

I am well aware that Doctor Pedro Recio de Agguero did not permit Sancho Panza to eat partridge, founding his orders on the aphorism of Hippocrates,—

" Omnis saturatio mala, perdix autem pessima;"

yet as the doctor refused other delicacies at the same time, such as tarts and sweets, we shall pay little attention to his authority, and less to that of Hippocrates. We shall eat many partridges, and wash them down with Burgundy, leaving the digestion to take care of itself.

To distinguish a gourmand it is commonly said that he does not like partridges without oranges. This proverb alone will prove that oranges are necessary to be eaten with partridges, if the experience of every day had not proved this great truth beyond all

contradiction. A lemon may be used; I have known those who, unable to obtain better, have permitted it: yet, when possible, never forget a sour orange.

A travelling painter had been retained at a convent to take the portrait of its patron. saint. His work being finished, all admired it. They placed it with pomp over the altar, with the following inscription in letters of gold :- "Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam." The painter was thanked, overpowered with praises, and very badly paid. The evening previous to his departure from the convent, wishing to revenge himself on the monks, he got up during the night, rubbed out the portrait, and set to work. With a few strokes of the brush he altered the figure, previously represented in prayer, as sitting on a sofa. Before him was a well-covered table, on which, under his nose, was placed a roast partridge, the steaming odour of which promised to the happy expectant positive joy; and in the hands, previously pressed in the attitude of devotion, he placed

a fine orange, from which the saint appeared to squeeze the juice with much satisfaction.

The following day the monks found their picture still over the altar, the motto was unaltered; you might still read, "Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam."

THE PHEASANT.

This bird is the king of game. At its name the eyes of a sportsman sparkle; his heart beats: listen to him; if he relate to you his exploits in the field, the word pheasant is never named with indifference. He speaks of partridges, hares, rabbits, with carelessness; but when he comes to this noble bird, his mouth is full, and he speaks of it with respect.

The lucky possessors of property in the shape of coverts, woods, &c., are rarely without pheasants. The great consolation to those who cannot afford to preserve them is, that they are by nature rovers—a property, however large, not having sufficient range for them: they ever desire to visit their neighbours. Having then a friendly preserve at hand, it is as well to plant a small covert in the immediate neighbourhood, or sow an acre of buck-wheat. Providence is

generous: it there conducts these noble animals, and you share your neighbour's pheasants, leaving to him the expense and trouble of preserving them. In foggy weather, the pheasant, when returning from feeding, wanders far, and not unfrequently loses his intended direction. Possessing, therefore, a covert near to a neighbouring preserve, it is as well to visit it during such weather, and rarely will you be disappointed.

The pheasant nourishes itself in the same manner as the partridge, and rears its young almost in a similar manner, but requires much care. They are generally found in low and damp places, in high grass, on the borders of marshes, and in the thickest parts of hedge-rows. This bird squats at times like a rabbit, and fancies itself in security when its head is hidden: it may then be killed with a stick.

The pheasant often runs far before the dog without rising, and at times he will not rise at all. This takes place when the wood is extensive, and the green or under-covert is high. Making a thousand turns, retracing his steps, he thus deceives the dog, which, getting on several fresh scents, is confounded, put out, and not able to recover himself. I have thus gone over an immense distance after a pheasant. You must follow your dog close, and be prepared for all chances.

A pheasant will also hold to the point without, steadily, and not run. This takes place when it is surprised. A sportsman, having no dog, may pass near to a dozen without seeing or causing one to rise. Should your dog come to the point in a very thick covert, and you see no chance of killing your bird should it rise, kill it on the run. Recollect, however, I give this permission to those who meet with a pheasant by chance: with reference to those who have preserves it is quite another question: to them occasions will not be wanting to fill their bags. In looking out for the pheasants which lie close, with their heads hidden, it is not difficult to discover the long tail. In such cases aim well at the spot which you suppose to be the body, and, if too near, retire a little, otherwise you destroy the bird.

It is a rare thing for an inexperienced sportsman to kill the first pheasant he fires at on the wing. No game causes so much emotion. The noise which he makes when rising, the desire one has of hitting so noble a bird, causes an indescribable sensation; consequently, too much haste is made, and the shot is missed. As regards myself, I admit with shame that the first pheasant which I beheld I fired at twice from the point of my dog, and missed it with four barrels. Latterly, it is true, I have had my revenge; and now those which pass within fair distance seldom have an opportunity of relating the result of our interview to their companions. A pheasant should not be fired at when it rises in the air, but when it flies from you; that is to say, at the moment when, ceasing to ascend, it takes a horizontal direction; and in all cases never aim at the tail. If it rise in a thick wood, fire when you can, inasmuch as, when it flies direct and low, a sight may soon be lost; but aim at the head; the ascending movement of the bird will throw it into your charge.

The pheasant flies heavily when first on the wing, yet when in direct flight it goes rapidly. Should it come towards or cross you, shoot at it as at a partridge. Separating by a thought the body from the tail, aim rather before than behind: the tail saves many a pheasant: it is a pleasing object to the inexperienced, but the shot which hit it count for nothing. This long tail is not in a straight line with the animal: his weight causes him to take almost a vertical position, in a manner that all the shot which pass or cross it fall below it. A shot fired in the tail leaves many feathers in the air: you believe the bird to be wounded, - no such thing: like the fox in the fable, he loses his brush in the battle, and is none the worse.

Coolness is required in pheasant-shooting; in the first place, because his noise in rising is startling, which always upsets the uninitiated; and secondly, as many do not desire their hens to be shot, you must satisfy yourself before pulling the trigger.

A wounded pheasant will often run far, and is more difficult to recover than a partridge. Allow your dog to do his duty, and, above all, do not fire again should other game rise near you. On such an occasion, I was unwise enough to fire at a rabbit. My dog ran after it, and could never recover his lost scent: thus I missed my rabbit, and lost my pheasant also.

We are told that a pheasant, when killed by a bird of prey, is far better than one killed in any other manner: this may be the case, but I never had the advantage of practically proving the result.

This superb bird, when placed in your larder, should never be abandoned without reflection to the capricious arrangements of a cook, who will roast it two days too soon, or two too late, according to the number or quality of your guests. The pheasant should be roasted on the day it should be eaten: if your friends are there, so much the better for them.

Some people hang them up by the legs, and when from the bird two or three drops of blood are seen to fall, then it is fit for those who do not like it somewhat high. Others hang them up by the tail, and when the pheasant falls they judge it worthy a place on their tables. Others, again, more difficult to please, believe that in order to eat a good pheasant he should be kept until he change his position without aid. These must permit me not to be of their opinion.

If the pheasant be a splendid bird to shoot, if it be an ornament to your game-bag, it is nevertheless an equally superb decoration to your table in the second course.

We are no longer in the time of the Emperor Heliogabalus, who, from ostentation or stupid prodigality, fed the lions of his menagerie with pheasants. When I kill one of these fine birds I eat it myself. A pheasant should not be eaten as other things are eaten; it requires a certain solemnity: neither is it without consideration that a subject of such importance should be treated: it should be delicately treated. Being, therefore, incapable to go into the depths of the subject, I shall borrow a page or two from a clever author on The Physiology of Taste.

"The pheasant is an enigma of which the

name is only revealed to adepts; they alone know how to relish it in all its goodness. This bird, when it is eaten within the three days subsequent to its death, has nothing to distinguish it. It is neither so delicate as a spring chicken, nor has it so much flavour as a quail: but cooked at the proper time its flesh is tender, sublime; its high flavour combining that of poultry and of venison. The time so desirable to select is that when the bird commences decomposition: it is then the flavour developes itself, and is mixed with an oil which requires a little fermentation to exalt it, as the cup of coffee which is only obtained by torrefaction. This moment is made known to the uninitiated by a slight odour and by the change of colour in the breast of the bird; but the inspired derive it by instinct. A clever cook decides with the glance of an eye the moment when the bird should be taken from the spit, or allowed a few turns more.

"When the pheasant is perfectly fit, pluck it, not sooner; then lard it with great care, selecting the primest and freshest bacon.

It is by no means an indifferent question that of plucking a pheasant at the proper time. Experience has proved that those which are kept in their feathers are more perfumed and of better flavour than those which have been kept plucked, inasmuch as the air neutralises a portion of the flavour, or that the juice intended to nourish the plumage dries up and injures the flesh. Your bird being plucked, it should be stuffed in the following manner:-Take two woodcocks, and divide the flesh into one portion, the trail and liver into another. With the meat you make a stuffing, by hashing and mixing it with some beef marrow, a small quantity of scraped bacon, pepper, salt, and herbs; add truffles sufficient to fill up the remaining portion of the inside of the pheasant. Be careful to secure that stuffing so that none of it escape, which is difficult when the bird has been kept long. Nevertheless, there are several ways of obtaining this point, and, among others, that of placing a crust of bread over the orifice and attaching it with a thread. Prepare a slice of bread an inch thick, on which the bird rests in its

length. Then take the trail and livers of the woodcocks, and mix them with truffles, an anchovy, some grated bacon, and a morsel of fresh butter: cover the bird with this paste, so that it shall be soaked through with the juice which melts while roasting. When the pheasant is done, serve it on the toast, surrounded with slices of orange, and be satisfied as to the event."

This delicious meat should in preference be washed down with some of the finest Burgundy, which I have fully decided after some experience. A pheasant thus cooked is food for angels. Already distinguished by its own flavour, it imbibes throughout the savoury and delicious odour which escapes from the woodcock and truffles. The toast, rich in itself, is impregnated in threefold combination by the juices which run through the bird when cooking; and thus, among all these good things, not an atom escapes its full appreciation: indeed such a dish is fit for the table of kings.

Animals feed, man eats; but the man of mind alone knows how to eat.

THE WOODCOCK.

"Cum nemus omne suo viridi spoliatur honore, Præda est facilis et amœna scalopax."—Nemisianus.

THERE are several species or variety of the woodcock: as, however, they have all the same habits, are found in the same localities, and nearly at the same period, we may class them under one head.

This bird of passage inhabits high grounds, and there rears its young. Towards the month of October it descends to the woods, preferring those in which pools of stagnant water, ponds, and marshy ground, are found. The east and north-east winds are those which bring most woodcocks; above all when accompanied by fogs. Woodcocks are found in spots where a collection of dead leaves has produced a sort of mould. It looks out for these as its pasturage, and then makes its toilet on the borders of a pool, in which it washes its beak and feet. The woodcock

does not make long flights, like the duck or the swallow: changing its climate without changing its country, quitting high mountains for woods, and woods for mountain tops, it goes over in a vertical sense the space which the others pass horizontally.

Woodcocks may be shot to a pointer, although not always seen in a wood. Some attach a small bell to his collar: when it is no longer heard, direct your steps whence the sound proceeded, and you will find your dog immoveable before the bird. The woodcock remains well to the point, and gets up under the feet of the shooter: the only difficulty which presents itself to the success of your shot is, that it rises in the wood where a thousand branches hide it from your sight. A short gun is very convenient when shooting woodcocks.

The flight of the woodcock is heavy and startling: it plunges behind bushes in order to hide itself, its wings and body offering a large surface to the shot of the sportsman. In elevated woods and among branches, fire when you can; in open coverts, allow him

to make his first plunge before you pull the trigger. After having fired, should your dog return with an empty mouth, be not disappointed: walk to the spot where the bird may have fallen. Dogs have generally a great repugnance to carry a woodcock: they would die of hunger with a roasted woodcock at hand without touching it with their teeth. A woodcock, hit or missed, should always be followed to the spot where it has dropped. It is readily put up again. If you amuse yourself by seeking others, you will quit a certainty for an uncertainty. The woodcock has bad sight, particularly during the day: it certainly sees better during the twilight than in broad day, and doubtless for this reason in Spain is termed gallina ciega,-blind fowl.

Woodcocks may be shot to a terrier, though such dog does not come within the scope of this book. Nevertheless we will say, in passing, this sport is very agreeable and advantageous. These dogs give tongue when the bird rises, and the shooter is thus on the alert.

When shooting in a wood, great precaution should be observed in keeping the line with your companions, otherwise most serious accidents may occur should any one advance too much. A word should be occasionally passed along the line to see that all are in their places. Walk always in a wood with your gun elevated: if it be horizontal, a branch may touch the trigger, and you may kill a poor woman who is collecting the dead wood; the wood-cutter may become a victim to your imprudence. As a general rule, in a wood never fire the height of a man without seeing clear before you the spot where your shot will strike. How many have missed a hare, and killed a poor devil sleeping behind a hedge! It would be better to lose a shot-what say I?-a thousand shots, sooner than fire at hazard in a wood. By neglecting this precaution many a sportsman has had cause to remember it during life. Covert-shooting requires great coolness and much experience, and I would not advise it for beginners. Practice and thought are required before you undertake it. If you

cannot see a bird get up with coolness; if you fire both barrels by chance and without aim, never go into a wood; and, more, be careful of the labourer in the fields, the shepherd, the cows and the horses. As regards the animals, you may get off by paying, but the labourer and the shepherd will be another affair: we are not in Russia, where a man may kill his servant if he pay a fair price. Woodcocks may be well shot in a battue; but many beaters are required, in order that they may be near together. They should have long sticks in their hands to beat well all the bushes, tufts of grass, &c., and the addition of a few terriers would add to the chance of success. The woodcock rises under the feet of man. Having been disturbed and realighted, it will run; but the first time it remains close, and if you have no dog, you may pass it ten times without seeing it. After a battue each sportsman has marked the spot where a missed woodcock or one not shot at has alighted; they go immediately to the spot, and if the wood is practicable with a pointer, giving the

beaters time for repose. When shooting in a wood which is not very extensive, it would be as well to have a marker: place him in one of the highest trees, and let him carefully look for the woodcock alighting. If I prohibit an unlimited destruction of hares and partridges, I withdraw my veto as regards birds of passage. Interdicting to you, as regards the first, means certain to destroy them; nevertheless I secure your satisfaction: but as regards woodcocks, snipes, wild ducks, plovers, &c., all means are good. Those at hand to-day are gone to-morrow; others will kill them if you do not: kill them if you can yourself. The gourmand who dines at a table d'hôte eats as much as he can, knowing he will be charged no more than others.

You have woodcocks in your woods, which are too thick readily to fire in. Start either in the morning or afternoon, and place yourself before twilight near the pools they frequent; you will readily perceive the prints of their feet on the moist earth: their droppings white, and without smell. Select the tracks

which they follow to approach the water and return to the wood. During the winter they arrive one after another: in the month of March they come in pairs. Place yourself for choice at the end of an avenue or path elevated, from which you can discover all before you. Stand near or behind a bush, never under a tree, the branches of which may prevent your firing. For such sport it is necessary to be all eyes; and, above all, be prompt to fire, as the woodcock passes rapidly, and always at the moment when twilight commences or ends.

Woodcocks are found all over the world; in the ancient Continent as in the new; in Siberia as in Senegal. It is an excellent bird when plump, and always best during frost. They should never be drawn. By pounding woodcocks in a mortar a most delicious purée is made, and if on such purée you place the wings of partridges piquées, the happiest culinary result is obtained. The woodcock should not be eaten too fresh, otherwise its flavour will not be sufficiently developed: you will have meat without

taste or delicacy: cooked as a salmis, its perfume mixes charmingly with that of truffles. Roasted with a breastplate of bacon, it should be watched over by the eye of a sportsman: a woodcock too much done is worthless; but a woodcock done to a turn, and placed on a toast black and unctuous from the trail, is a most delicate and delicious morsel, the most savory which a man can eat; and if he take the precaution to wash it down with some first-rate Burgundy, he may flatter himself that he has dined well.

The President of the tribunal of Avignon had dined with the Préfect. In the double quality of a distinguished gourmand and of an intrepid sportsman, he officiated always with a good conscience. Having taken his coffee to facilitate digestion, and arrived at his third little glass of cognac to qualify the passage of the coffee, his host accosted him as to whether he had dined well?—"Why, yes," he replied. This answer appeared to be accompanied by restrictions. "Eh, no! I have dined well enough." "Well enough

signifies nothing."—"Yes, yes, I have dined very well." "I can understand you, my friend; you regret those fine woodcocks which left the table uncut."—"Why, yes, I could have eaten my share." "Wait a moment, and they shall be served for you."—"After the coffee? after the liqueur? it is impossible." "Nothing is impossible to a stomach like yours."

The order was given—a small table laid in the adjoining room—the woodcocks were served, and the happy President ate them.

This respectable magistrate said one day, "We have just been eating a superb turkey: it was excellent, stuffed with truffles to the neck, tender, delicate, and of high flavour; we left only the bones." "How many of you were there?" said I.—"Two," he replied. "Two?"—"Yes, the turkey and myself."

An original said to me one day: "See how admirable is Providence: it has caused all the rivers to run by large towns." We ought to be thankful to that same Providence, as doubtless it is for us that voyaging instinct has been given to certain birds. Each successive year quails are sent to us to be roasted, or served en papillotes, the only good way of eating them. Some serve them en salmis and in patties; but this is a great mistake: indeed it is an act of the greatest ignorance. The perfume of the quail easily evaporates: the moment it is put in any liquid whatsoever, the flavour no longer exists: you have still a delicate meat, but insipid and tasteless, and no longer a quail.

Nevertheless there are circumstances when you may permit yourself to eat a boiled quail: it is when on a shooting party you find yourself in some isolated or village inn, where no means to practise the culinary art are found. It is doubtless very good, but that does not satisfy a correct appetite. You have neither time nor patience to roast your birds, and have not all the necessary additions at hand. Then pluck and draw your quails, and suspend them by a string over the boiling pot; allow them to

remain five or six minutes, and serve them hot. You will find them passable, and it is perhaps a dish that requires the least time. But this is only an exception, which confirms the rule that quails should be eaten roasted: and if you desire a proof-for there are some who never believe your assertions you shall have one of much antiquity, viz. "that the Israelites found them roasted in the desert;" and as they apparently had neither guns, pointers, nor cooks, they would scarcely have known what to do with them, had not a higher Power provided them. Nevertheless these quails could not have been larded, as the Jews never eat bacon, and were probably not so good as ours, as the larding is indispensable.

All rails furnish the cook with a pleasing task, delicate, and of high flavour: prepared in the stew-pan, their flavour developes itself: the spit too often dries them up. I therefore recommend their being eaten en salmis, seasoned with truffles or mushrooms. Nevertheless, they are excellent roasted: it requires, however, the eye

of one who understands his business to superintend them. Never place entire confidence in your cook: a slight circumstance may cause you to be disappointed: your rail may be overdone, and in such case you may as well offer a burnt mutton-chop to your friend.

THE WILD DUCK.

"Ainsi dans leur saison les canes du Lapland Partent, formant dans l'air un triangle volant."

This beautiful bird of passage arrives in the autumn and departs in the spring. There remain here and there a few that make their nests in France; they select marshes, pools surrounded by wood, in which they lay their eggs. The desire of these idle ones appears to be simply that of affording to the sportsman the pleasure of killing the young birds, which grant to the gastronome the ineffable delight of eating a bird of such exquisite flavour.

The flocks of wild ducks are sometimes very numerous, the great difficulty is to approach them. It is generally necessary to use a boat as well as a duck-gun; even then your shots are at some distance, though you may bring down ten or a dozen at a time. Among those hit, many are not killed,

only wounded; they still swim, though they can no longer fly: it is necessary to pursue them, but a second shot generally effects your desire. But it is not exactly of that species of sport that we here write; we must not forget that we are sporting with a dog.

In the first place, you must prepare yourself with some long water-proof boots, strong and pliant. In order to obtain these I could recommend you to many places, as also give you an excellent receipt to keep them in order; but in the present day there is scarcely a town in which you may not be creditably supplied.

Be careful to keep your dog close. Wild ducks rise at some distance from the shooter, more particularly when the flock is numerous. As with the partridge, a single bird is far more easily approached than a covey. Do not then allow your dog by too much eagerness to render the chance more difficult. Charge your gun with large shot, No. 3 or No. 2. The wild duck, above all water-birds, has generally the thickest plumage; you must therefore have a large shot

to penetrate this covering, more particularly when the bird rises at some distance. Hunt with care all the sides of the pool; beat well the long weeds and rushes, and do not hurry too much, or you may leave a bird behind you. In this manner you may find snipes, rails, &c. When duck-shooting, something is always to be met with. In marsh shooting the best of dogs will sometimes lose his scent: the water which penetrates the nostrils, or the particles of mud, is the cause. It will be as well, therefore, sometimes to allow him to rest, dry himself in the sun, and begin again. It is almost needless that I should add, that in duck-shooting, as in all other shooting save that of snipe, it is necessary to have the wind. A good wind in sporting is a sine quâ non.

The wild duck is perhaps the game which causes the most noise when rising. The flapping of its wings in the water, and soon after in the air, astonishes a novice. It is on this account that Varron gives it the name of quassa gipenna.

In firing at a wild duck on the wing you

have far more chance of killing it than on the water. In the first case the feathers are separated and more readily penetrated, in the second it is quite the contrary. If you fire at a duck on the water, aim always at that part of the bird immediately above the surface of the water. The duck will sometimes dive; in such case be prepared to fire with your second barrel the moment it rises again. When firing at this bird on the wing, it will be as well to fire rather high than too much at the body: in fact, let your aim be at the head. It is sometimes very difficult to recover a wounded wild duck; the best dog may be at fault: the bird dives, and re-appears twenty yards off; the moment the dog approaches he dives again, and so on ad infinitum. If in a boat this is soon ended, as you get another shot: if on land, I pity you. The spaniel is the best dog for marsh shooting: as for the setter, he is too soon done; rheumatic and other pains distress him, and destroy his scenting powers: this is a sport too rough for his constitution. Should you see afar off some

wild ducks on the bank of a river, mark a tree or stone in their immediate locality; then make a circuit sufficiently extended to prevent their hearing or seeing you, and make towards the spot where they are. If the bank be high, you will easily approach them, but take care your dog is behind you. Should the sun throw your shadow on the water they will be off the moment they discover it, the manner of hiding the shadow of a sportsman being not yet discovered. In a marsh it is very easy to attract wild ducks by placing there some tame ones; this method may be dated for centuries back. We have already said an idle wild duck will occasionally remain in our climate, where they breed, lay, and rear their young. When a nest of young ones is found they are easily destroyed. This, however, must, of course, only be done when they are fit to hand over to the cook. Having decided on killing them, the old hen must first be shot; after this, the young ones, deprived of their guide, are easily brought to reason: they are found one after another in the long grass, or in the rushes, and should

one remain, it is readily enticed the following day by attaching near to the river a tame duck; the young ones take it for their mother, and are not long in coming to be killed by its side. It is very difficult to judge distances on the water: in order to do this well requires much practice. Some who possess large pools or lakes, where many wild ducks are found, cause stakes to be placed in the water: these stakes, all within shot the one of another, serve as a guide to the shooters, as beyond such distance shot would be wasted.

Wild ducks, geese, and teal have admirable instinct in their flight; the flock separates in two wings, forming exactly the letter V. That one seen flying at the head of the two columns at the spot where the two branches of the letter unite, has necessarily less fatigue than the others: all fly behind him, following the direction which he traces in the air: he is the pilot. A flock of wild ducks is an army, of which each soldier becomes a general in his turn. After a certain time, which is always the same, the rear one

hastens his pace, and takes the lead until another supplies his place, and so on.

Scarcely has the swallow taken its departure, than on the winds of the North are seen advancing a colony who come to replace the travellers to the South, in order that no void should remain in our fields. In the grey time of autumn, when the keen wind whistles through the branches and carries off the remaining leaves, a flock of wild ducks, all arrayed in file, traverse in silence a melancholy sky. Should they perceive from their airy height any Gothic manor surrounded by pools, lakes, and forests, it is there they purpose to descend. They await the night; and, making their evolutions above the woods, the moment the shades of evening darken the valley, with neck extended and whistling wing they descend all at once on the waters which tempt them. A general cry, followed by a profound silence, is heard in the marsh. Guided by a small light which probably shines through the narrow window of a tower, the travellers approach the walls, favoured by the rushes

and the night: then flapping their wings, and crying out by intervals amidst unceasing winds and rain, they salute the habitation of man.

It is a remarkable fact, that teal, wild ducks, snipes, plovers, lapwings, which all serve as food to man, should come at the moment when the earth is unfruitful; whereas strange birds which come during the fruit season have only pleasurable relations with us: they are musicians sent to charm amid our shrubberies. Some may be excepted, such as the quail and the wood-pigeon, of which the shooting does not take place till after the harvest, and which fatten themselves with our wheat to be served on our tables. Thus the birds of the North are the manna of the North winds, as nightingales are the gift of the Zephyrs. From whatever point of the horizon the wind blows Providence sends us a present. The wild duck is the species of game the most known: all over the world you hear of their having being killed; they are the hope of the shipwrecked. Abandon a man in any part of the known world,

give him a gun, powder, and shot, and he will kill wild ducks for his food.

The wild duck is of higher flavour and more savory than the tame duck: whether roasted with mushrooms, or *en salmis* with truffles, the wild duck is a most distinguished meat.

All that we have said in reference to wild ducks applies to the teal, and in general to all water-birds. We shall only add a few observations with regard to the moorhen, which you meet with when shooting snipes, rails, and wild ducks.

This meeting is agreeable: it is a good shot which kills a water-fowl, but it should be well aimed that it strike fully: if the slightest life remain, he dives and disappears. The moorhen possesses an astonishing instinct in order to avoid the game-bag and the spit. She swims for some time under water, and, instead of re-appearing as the wild duck, places itself under the leaf of a lily or among rushes, and, allowing its beak to appear, takes breath and remains immovable. It requires a good dog to find them: he should beat the rushes and the reeds on

the borders of a pool, and often double, as the water-fowl will make a hundred turns to deceive him. The moorhen is otherwise very easily shot. It gets up under your feet: allow it to fly; take good aim at its body, and do not fire till you are sure of success. When it remains immovable, it may be taken, from its black plumage and the white mark on its head, for an heraldic bird fallen from the crest of an ancient cavalier.

THE SNIPE.

As much as the snipe resembles the wood-cock in its plumage, in an equal degree do its habits and actions differ. Snipes are found in marshes, in low and wet grounds, whereas the woodcock seeks the mountain or the wood. As a general rule, wherever you find snipes, never look for woodcocks, and vice versâ. The snipe arrives in France during the autumn, and disappears during the cold weather, returns during the spring, and then directs its flight again to the North, where it breeds. Some may produce their young in France, but these are exceptions.

It is a very agreeable sport that of snipeshooting, but neither the shooter nor his dog must fear the water. Supply yourself with water-proof boots; walk and look out; you will find amusement. This shooting requires as much experience as address. The snipe flies with great rapidity, but this is the least inconvenience. It commences by starting straight for several yards, makes two or three plunges, and then flies straight again. If you wait till these two or three plunges have been made before firing, it is far away, without it has risen under your feet. If you fire during these doubles, you will generally miss it. If you are prepared, it is better to fire at once, and you have then the chance of the second barrel should you fail with the first after the three doubles; but to shoot thus you must be very quick—few are very successful; nevertheless I have seen many who, from constant practice in snipe-shooting, can kill them as easily as partridges.

The snipe can be shot at from morning till night. Those once put up will be found again. You may fire always, and often miss: in no shooting is so much powder wasted. It may be as well to charge your two barrels with different-sized shot, the right with No. 1; the left with No. 6, or even No. 5. The small shot may be used in double charge, or at least a charge and a half; as you will fire it at a short distance it will bind better. It

will be as well to diminish the charge of the larger shot by a quarter or a third, as it is required to carry further, and if you fire with correct aim there will still be sufficient.

The snipe allows itself to be easily found by the dog, and it is the only kind of game which can be hunted with a bad wind. It is even better to have the wind in the rear, and for this reason,—the snipe has the habit of facing the wind, and of flying straight before it. If you find him with a contrary wind, it starts before you; if not, it whirls in the direction of the wind, and then such whirls, added to the plunges which it never omits, greatly complicate the question. Snipes are more readily shot during cloudy than bright weather. The jack-spipe lies close in thick tufts of grass, and gets up almost always under the feet of the shooter. But the larger snipe has all the allurements of the water-rail: it runs, is put up with difficulty, and does not fly till far from the dog: it then fancies itself out of danger, but the gun often damages such ideas. Bourgainville found snipes in the Malonnes Isles,

and ascertained they possessed habits different from those which we deem them to have in Europe. As there is nothing to disturb them in such latitudes, they make their nests in the open country, and are easily killed; they have no fear, and omit the doubles when rising. Advice to those who are disconcerted by these movements: they have only to make the voyage and they may kill snipes as easily as quails, which may probably be sufficient compensation. Snipes are everywhere to be found, as woodcocks. Their eating is delicate and delicious, and as regards their culinary preparation, we refer you to our receipt for the woodcock.

Sporting gastronomes, and they are in a large majority—we desire, but scarcely know how, to give them the receipt of the salmis des "Bernardins." It may be applied to all sorts of game. These good fathers do not disdain any science. In those days the cloister produced men who knew a thing or two.

Take four snipes, roast them, but not too much: cut them up according to the rules of the art, then divide the wings, the legs, the breasts, and the backs, and arrange them on a dish. On the dish on which you dissect them, and which ought to be of silver, crush the livers and the entrails of the bird, on which squeeze the juice of four lemons and the rind finely mixed of one. On the members already prepared sprinkle a few pinches of salt and of allspice, two spoonsful of excellent mustard, and half a glass of first-rate sherry: then place the dish over a heater of spirits of wine, and stir it well, so that the whole be well impregnated with the seasoning, but let none unite. Take great care not to let it boil; but when it approaches that degree of heat, sprinkle it with some fine olive oil: diminish your heat, and continue to stir for several minutes. Then take off the dish, and serve it immediately, so that it may be eaten hot.

Recollect, when you meet with this dish, to use your fork, as in case you touch it with your fingers you will devour them.

CHANCE GAME.

"Tros Tyriusve mihi nullo discrimine agetur."-VIRGIL.

WE shall unite under the above title all birds, which, without counting them among the hope of the sportsman who shoots to the pointer, may nevertheless occasionally aid in filling his game-bag. When in the field he meets with them within shot, he ought to take advantage of the chance without permitting himself to think of the necessity.

Lapwings and plovers are birds of passage; they arrive in large flocks, but they are very cunning and approached with difficulty. It is rare that a dog points to them, and it is only by surprise that such an event occurs. When, by the nature of the ground, or in a high wind, the shooter meets with them on a sudden, then a double shot fired into the centre of the flock causes a desirable result. Although the guignard is a species

of plover, it forms an exception to the general rule; it allows itself to be pointed by the dog. I have killed several in this manner. In the month of September, when the weather is warm, they are easily approached, and at times may even be fired at sitting. This is a bird much esteemed by gastronomists, though little known. Its flesh is extremely delicate, and very superior to lapwings and other plovers. In countries where plovers abound many may be taken. The sport of trapping, netting, snaring them, and other means, are resorted to in war against them: of these means, however, we shall not write, inasmuch as we sport only with the dog. When shooting the hare and partridge, one frequently meets with the wood-pigeon and sometimes the turtle dove, which is agreeable as being a chance. Such birds add to the game-bag; and often the shooter has to thank such chance game for the pleasure of a day's sport.

The plover, the lapwing, and the woodpigeon, may be added to the contents of a game-bag: as regards the dove, opinions differ. Many do not consider it as game. I do not agree with them: it is shot on the wing, and often at a great distance.

As regards the thrush, the blackbird, and the lark, they can only be counted on in the kitchen; even were your bag so filled it would not be with game. Nevertheless this should not prevent your killing a thrush, should occasion offer, of which there are four species in France. The common thrush is found in September among the vineyards and in gardens; it is the best of all; is very delicate eating, and very savory. The others differ in size and period of the year when most easily shot, but they are all good on the table. When thrushes are abundant, the shooting of them is by no means wanting in sport. You should have a companion: place yourselves on each side of a vineyard; send your dogs into the centre, and each fire at those which rise, and, if good shots, you will soon be well supplied. In this manner you may get an unusual number of shots, and such practice is of great advantage to a young sportsman. He accustoms himself to look out and be prepared to follow the bird with his aim before pulling the trigger. The thrush does not always rise in the same manner: sometimes it flies straight, at others makes many plunges; at other times its flight is undulated as the waves of an agitated sea: at last it rises in the air and falls again, describing the course of an arrow. A sportsman who can under all circumstances kill a thrush will seldom miss a partridge. When the thrush is fat it runs between the vines, and is put up with difficulty. A stone must be thrown at it, or a piece of earth, to start it; but you must be ready to fire, for it will settle again within ten or twenty paces.

Thrushes may also be shot when seated on the branches of trees, but they are not easily seen, and at times you may be quite close without discerning them. If you find yourself within twenty or five-and-twenty paces of a tree on which a thrush had settled, aim at the place where it settled, and fire: I have often succeeded in this manner. All thrushes are birds of passage. Never-

theless some always remain in France during the winter, as well as larks, &c.: in fact it would appear, with regard to birds as with men, that there are workmen and pretenders, active and idle.

The country where most thrushes are seen is on the borders of the Baltic Sea, at Dantzic, &c. In that country their number is really prodigious at the season for flight. Every tree, indeed almost every branch, has its thrush: you may fill your bag, and there is scarcely a table on which they are not served on silver skewers half a yard long. A spit of fat thrushes, roasted and larded, is a most delicate dish. They should never be drawn-not more so than a woodcock; the toast placed under them will always be improved. Some eat them en salmis, others make pies of them: this is a mistake-never dine with such people, or you will contract their bad habits. In the neighbourhood of Paris, and even farther north, ortolans may be found: indeed, I kill several each season. Although this excellent bird is rarely fat till it has passed some time in cage, we have

eaten many tolerably plump, and not without merit. Few sportsmen know an ortolan: they will pass it by without looking at it: they disdain it. We pity them.

A dog will point well to the lark, and with the same firmness as to the quail or the partridge should the shooter desire it, if he fire on each occasion, and cause his dog to bring back the dead bird. But when a shooter punishes his dog for false points to these birds, he soon ceases to notice them. For a beginner the shooting of larks on the wing is good practice, which he may often repeat, as these birds are found at each step in certain seasons. It requires quick sight to shoot them, as they are certainly more difficult to kill than the quail or the partridge. It is no longer as the swallow, which passes and repasses before you, and which you fire at when it suits you. With the lark you must seize the moment, which, when once lost, will not be recovered.

In countries where game is not abundant, the shooting of larks with a looking-glass is an amusement taken advantage of from want of better. In those where much game is found, when partridges can no longer be shot, larks may be so. Whether from coquetting or curiosity, the lark likes to approach a brilliant object: it looks, and admires itself while singing.

Looking-glasses are made which turn themselves, and move like a clock by the aid of clock-work. They are very ingenious, but the rays which they throw out are very uniform. I prefer the ancient glass which our fathers made use of, and which were turned with a string. According as the sun was strong or weak, so we could accelerate or retard their movements. This sport is carried on in the morning during the month of October, when the weather is clear, till two o'clock. A single glass is quite sufficient for many shooters if the larks are abundant. It is one of those sports where most powder is burnt, and as it is necessary to load quickly, it is as well to make use of cartridges. If the lark is difficult to shoot when rising from the field, it is quite the contrary when shooting with a looking-glass; it soars, flaps its wings, and hovers without changing its position. It is like shooting a bird sitting on the branch of a tree. A spit of larks, fat and well-dressed, has its merit: they must neither be drawn nor roasted too much. I am aware that great hunger is not easily appeased with larks, but they do very well with other dishes.

We were one day in the fields, and we saw a shooter at some distance, who appeared desirous of leaping a hedge. Our friend had his right leg behind him as if to take his jump, and then he stopped. "He'll jump," said one. "He won't," said another; and his movements began again. "The ditch must be very large," said I, "since he hesitates so long." "It is quite small," said one. "It is deep," said another. "It is dry." "It is full of water," To be brief, when we approached him we found an honest sportsman shooting larks, who turned the looking-glass with a string attached to his leg: he had no thought of jumping a ditch, since there was none.

INTREPID SPORTSMEN.

Ad limina nota

Ipse domum serâ quamvis se nocte ferebat.

Hunc procul errantem rabidæ venantis Iuli,
Commovêre canes."—Virgil.

Ir the weather be not agreeable for shooting it will nevertheless do very well for keen sportsmen. Bad weather is sometimes the best. If you are young and fearless, if the rain does not frighten you, start: your first steps will alone appear distasteful, and with a detonator you have nothing to fear.

During a fine rain partridges are easily approached: they rise from your feet; their flight is heavy and not fast, and you soon find them again. Some of the best partridge shooting I ever had has been during rainy weather in a beet-root field; clover is not so good, as they have no shelter, whereas the beet-root plant, well supplied with

leaves, serves as an umbrella for a whole covey of partridges. They huddle together, idleness retains them, and they only rise at the last extremity. I should, however, also observe that dogs have less scent; the water which enters their nostrils neutralises the powers of smell, and which is only supplied by continual marches and counter-marches. If the wind be very high, still you may shoot; game hears you less. The hare is easily surprised, and is not more difficult to shoot than in calm weather. This is not the same with regard to partridges: the height of the wind adds to the quickness of their flight; they start precipitately, in which you must be a good shot to knock them over properly. It has been proved by a thousand observations that the hare allows itself to be more readily approached when the wind is from the south in winter, and from the east in summer; the west and south-west winds are good in all seasons. The real sportsman starts in all weathers; he rarely consults the barometer: he acts according to the state of the atmosphere,

but he sports because he likes sporting. He understands the habits and the movements of game: he beats the fields if the weather be fine. If the wind be high, he tries the hedge-rows and the sheltered spots: he shoots when it is cold, when it is hot; he shoots during rain, during hail; he always sports. He starts at midnight in order to arrive at the corner of a wood where woodcocks are likely to be found at break of day: the woodcocks are not there: what avails it? he has enjoyed the hopeto-morrow he will rejoice in the feast. What do I say? The day is long and is not finished. The sportsman starts for the fields, beats all the corners of the wood, and finds nothing. He has been twenty miles without firing a shot: he returns fatigued, disgusted, harassed, but in his path a hare gets up and is killed. From that time adieu to fatigue; nothing rests so much as the weight of your game-bag.

Previous to killing it you were tired, and walked with your head down; but the moment this interesting quadruped was safe in your game-bag, as a sailor in his license, your frame expanded, your eyes shone again: you carry your head high: you are no longer the same man. When I meet with a sportsman in the field, I decide, at fifty yards, if he has been successful or not, and am rarely deceived.

For all sportsmen, sporting is a passion; it is necessary to fatigue yourself to be satisfied: but that fatigue is a pleasure. The shooter knows that on his return he can rest, that a good repast and a good fire await him; the longer such pleasures are delayed the more are they enjoyed. What gratification, in fact, to dine near a brilliant fire, with dry clothes, with clean linen, after having been out all the day in mud and wet! To many sportsmen shooting is more than a passion; it is a rage. I have seen them during the month of November place themselves among rushes with the water up to their middles, and in this to watch for four or five hours together a flock of ducks, which rarely come within shot; others, who would pass the whole night near a wood for

a chance shot at a roe-deer, when sometimes a rabbit might appear in the neighbourhood. One day—two—ten days pass without sport; at last they are successful, and from that moment all their troubles are forgotten.

In England sporting is the rage of old and young. A professor of mathematics at Cambridge hunted at seventy-five years of age, and was then blind. His horse followed that of his groom. Addison, passing a joke on the Scotch, stated that on one occasion a fox passed through an encampment, and all the army followed it.

During the year 1830, immense flocks of wild ducks appeared on the banks of the Maine. These young ladies had fine ears, and were most difficult to approach. In order to kill them it was necessary to await their time. But how to wait for ducks during the night with the barometer at 15°! An honest butcher proved the possibility. During one month this honest man never went to bed. He had several holes made near the river, in which he hid himself, and there remained throughout the night watch-

ing wild ducks. He killed and sold more than he did legs of mutton or rounds of beef. Yet few are found sufficiently hardy for such an undertaking. I have never tried such experiments, because I am not fond of hidden shooting; and more, I am unable to encounter severe cold and wet save on the move: but at all times, and during all weathers, I can shoot when walking.

When the ground is covered with snow, partridges huddle together in order to keep themselves warm, and they may then be easily approached should you deem it worth your while to dress yourself in white, which may be done by wearing white trousers and putting a shirt over your other clothes, and placing a white handkerchief on your head. By no other colour appearing in the field, the partridges do not observe you far off; and if you have the wind, and take advantage of the ground to hide yourself, you are sure of a few good shots. Rabbits should not be ferreted during snow: the rabbit is chilly and idle, and will not leave its burrow; in fact, he will allow himself sooner to be

eaten. In such case you must wait long enough, as the ferret, which fears the cold, will not hurry itself to return. I have tried this, and can assure you it is not very agreeable to wait four or five hours in the snow by a rabbit-hole. Generally, all kinds of sport during snow, cold, and rain should be made on the move, to circulate the blood; the movement heats you, and it is dangerous to stop: you must walk and walk on, and should you feel fatigued, return to your own fire-side, leaving more serious affairs to the following day.

There are many intrepid sportsmen who have broken their arms and legs in the heat of the chase; many fingers, hands, and even eyes have been lost: all these accidents have not prevented the sufferers from sporting again. Whether it be hunting, shooting, or rat-killing, sport will be ever sport.

THE SELFISHNESS OF SPORTSMEN.

"Sensible à la gloire,
Fier de la victoire,
A qui veut te croire
Tu le conteras?"—Robin des Bois,

The self-love of sportsmen may be compared to that of authors, actors, and billiard-players; with all it is in the extreme. Should a bird rise, and four shooters fire, does it fall, each one declares to having killed it—all are sure; they all give their words to the fact. I have known quarrels take place on the subject of a partridge. The good shot, however, will always give way sooner than cause a dispute, which is generally sustained by him who has no confidence in his own shooting, and fears to return with an empty game-bag. But if all act with courtesy, which should ever be the case among gentlemen, these differences

rarely occur. As a general rule, the head of game belongs to him who stops it in flight or course. One should always allow the game time when fired at by a companion. Fire yourself only when you are sure it is not wounded, and not even then without you are shooting with friends. Never fire to the point of a dog to which another person is shooting without being requested to do so. Neither ought you to follow up the bird put up by another shooter. The hare which runs is not dead. All have a right to fire at a hare which runs. Nevertheless if it be wounded by one of your companions, if his dog follows it near, you should not fire; or, should you do so, consider it the shot of him who has wounded it. I found myself in the fields with a stranger: we fired at a partridge, which fell. "It is mine," said he. "I could claim it, since we both fired," said I. "Yes, but I saw it fall to my shot, I am certain; I give you my word." "Take it," said I. As we were loading our guns, I observed, from the height of his ramrod, that my friend put in

a double charge. By my advice he made use of his drawing-rod, and perceived his last charge had never gone off. His gun had snapped, whereas mine was discharged. My friend had been quite certain of having killed, and had given his word to that effect. He was desirous to give up the partridge; I begged him to accept it. At this he was not sorry, as there is pleasure in showing something on your return home. A sportsman who returns without anything avoids meeting his acquaintances, and, should he see any one, gets out of the way. If, on the contrary, his bag is well filled, with a face radiant in smiles he fearlessly walks on, that his game may be seen by all.

During several years, when I have enjoyed some good shooting with an old military friend, on our return he was asked by his wife if he had had good sport? "Yes," said he, "I have killed ten brace and he has killed six." Yet, on the following day, if I had killed twelve brace and he five, he would answer, "We have killed seven-and-twenty brace." This amiable woman then

never failed to say to me, "You have killed the most, as he speaks in the plural number." "Sportsmen are very amiable, and very gallant," said a lady; "they rise at four o'clock in the morning; they take great precaution quietly to descend the stairs; they never put on their thick shoes till they are ready to start; they fear to disturb us by their noise; and then they discharge their guns under our very bedroom window." Observe a sportsman who has missed his shot, will he not ever have a good reason for so doing? The bird was too far; the gun hung fire, &c.; the next time he will be more careful; or, his powder is not sufficiently strong-his shot is mixed, not sufficiently round, and scatters too much—a tree prevented his aim-if not a tree, the sun, or, probably, the moon! He will tell you a thousand such tales. Be assured it is never his fault that he has missed. A shooter always augments the distance; he fires at thirty paces, and says it is fifty; he does not touch the bird; this is easily accounted for - it rises too far off. If he kill it, he takes to

himself the merit accordingly. It required far more address, far better aim, better everything than others have, but which he possesses.

And then the lost birds! this is the great battle-horse-two wounded partridges, which the dog could not find because the weather was too hot; a rabbit hit, which disappears in its hole; a hare with its leg broken—the dog was in the act of catching it when the hare doubled, and, being close to a wood, escapes. All this signifies, that "had I as much luck as address my bag would be full." To which may be answered, "When you find a partridge wounded by another, keep it yourself." If your dog catch a hare running which some else has wounded, say nothing, all is grist to the mill. Sportsmen are fabulous; this is a proverb admitted at all times and in all countries. The proverb is true; but if it were not so, it would be necessary to become so for the honour of the proverb, which ought never to be blamed. Nevertheless it is not well to push

the question too far, and thus by doubt to revoke all the tales of sportsmen.

When shooting, extraordinary things are met with; and frequently, from fear of the above proverb, I have scarcely dared to relate facts which have actually occurred to me, as it is not agreeable to see a smile of incredulity on the face of your listeners.

One of my ancestors was shooting on a mountain covered with snow; he was on the summit, near a precipitous descent; he fired at a hare, which fled down the descent; the hare turned over and over, the snow attaching itself each time until it literally formed a ball, which became larger and larger. Hurried on by its weight, which augmented the ball, it continued its way to the foot of the mountain, and became so large and so hard that with difficulty was it broken up to take out the hare. This anecdote, ridiculous as it may appear, is nevertheless perfectly true. When sporting circumstances multiply and combine in

such a manner that something new is ever occurring.

A young and inexperienced sportsman, in despair at each day returning without success and becoming a laughing-stock to his companions, bought one day a hare, and then went to the field exhibiting his game, pretending a pleasure which he did not feel. On the hare being examined, however, it was soon discovered that it had been killed ten days previously, and was already nearly in a state of decomposition. The fraud was discovered, and he became a greater butt for his companions. Several days afterwards a peasant met him, with his game-bag, as usual, empty, and presented to his alluring eye a superb hare. He bought it, after assuring himself that it was fresh; he had not forgotten on this occasion to see that its eyes had not sunk into its head, and that its belly showed the white. Here was another cause of laughter; on the hare being examined, it was found not to have died by the gun, but to have been taken in a snare.

NECESSARY PRECAUTIONS.

"La père en prescrira la lecture à son fils."

It is impossible to be too careful when you have a terrible arm in your hands which can cause two deaths. We shall repeat in this chapter all that we have previously said on this head, at the same time adding the advice which long experience has dictated to us. We do not fear the repetition; the only inconvenience will be that we may forget. Never keep too much powder in your house; far better to procure it from time to time as you may require it; a spark may ignite it, and the effects are terrible. Always keep your powder in a dry place, which is locked and far from the reach of children. Should you have occasion to meddle with powder, let it be done during the day. If you absolutely require to fill your powder-flask at night, do it as

far as possible from the candles, as a spark may send you and your house into the air. At an inn, in a farm-house, or any other place of meeting for a shooting breakfast, let your guns be so placed as that neither children nor your dogs may throw them down. A detonating gun may explode by the falling of the hammer if the shock be on the side of the caps. If you approach the fire, do so without your powder-flask; a few grains only need escape to throw you into the air as a shell. The town of Eysenach, in Saxony, was destroyed in this manner in 1810; a convoy of artillery was passing through it, a few grains of powder escaped from a barrel, the shoe of a horse ignited it—the barrel exploded; another, a hundred; and in a minute three hundred houses were destroyed, and two thousand persons killed.

"Quæque ipse miserrima vidi."

When you return from the field always discharge your gun; having once entered your house you may possibly forget it. You

have many things to say; to dress for dinner; your appetite hastens you. You place your gun in a corner; a child finds it, and if it be loaded all is possible. If for your personal protection you desire to retain a loaded gun in the house, let it not be that with which you sport. Have another; place it in security during the day, and be careful where you place it during the night, though ready to your hand. The charge of such gun should from time to time be changed; this point is necessary. If you go to your shooting ground in a carriage, keep your gun well cased in leather. Flint guns will sometimes go off without being touched; this never takes place with detonators. The cock should be always down when not loaded. These guns probably require more precaution than others. If the cock which is down on the cap finds itself raised by anything whatever, should it fall ever so lightly, its force is sufficient to ignite the powder. I one day returned wet from shooting. I was wiping my gun, which I held at length on a

table; when, passing the cloth over the locks, my hand touched the trigger,—the gun went off and lodged the contents in the side of the room. Since that time I always discharge my gun before entering. On another occasion I had just fired, and was re-loading the barrel discharged. During the operation a partridge rose from my feet. I was in the act of raising my gun to take aim, when the cock, hitching in some part of my dress, pulled it back; it fell, and the charge passed within six inches of my head. These two accidents could not have occurred with a good flint gun.

Should your gun fall, and a certain quantity of dirt introduce itself into the barrels, be careful to remove it by passing the ramrod several times into the interior. I should then advise you to place another wadding; this wad will force the particles of sand which may have remained on the charge, and prevent an accident. When you jump a ditch, always uncock your gun. If you pass through a hedge, a thick covert,

or underwood, care is not less required; and in many positions the mere uncocking of your gun is not sufficient, you must remove your caps; but having done so, let down your cocks: without this precaution the powder may escape by the nipples, or become wet. In both cases your gun will miss fire, which is always a great annoyance.

When in the open, carry your gun at an angle of forty-five degrees; when in a wood it ought to be at fifty, that is to say, straight. Let your hand always be on the small of the gun, that the finger never comes near the trigger till you take aim. If your companion do not follow these precautions, give him a hint; if he regard it not, get out of his way: fly such people as a pest; they are worse than the cholera. Ordinarily never walk in a line save with experienced sportsmen and reasonable men. Fly from incautious youths; they sometimes wound a man, always miss a partridge, and often kill your dogs. When your gun

snaps, elevate the barrel in a vertical position; often it only hangs fire, and will go off the moment after.

Be careful not to overcharge or ram down too hard, and see well that no air is left between the wadding and the charge; this want of precaution may cause your gun to burst, particularly when the barrels are dirty. When alone, never fire when facing a wall, as the shot may recoil in your face; this inconvenience would not take place had you fired obliquely. If in company, never fire against a wall, against a heap of stones, or on a paved place; your shot is always dangerous to some one. In my own neighbourhood a gentleman recently lost his eye in this manner. His companion fired at a rabbit amongst some stones; he was thirty paces on the other side; the same shot which lost him his eye killed the rabbit. Should you fire on the water recollect that your shot ricochets, and be careful of your neighbours. Never fire into the middle of a hedge without being assured no one is on the other side; you may kill a

sleeping shepherd, and it would be a pity to put an end to his dreams and prevent his awaking. In a wood never fire at man's height, or on the ground, without seeing before you. In vineyards it is very dangerous to fire low; children are sometimes stealing the fruit, and they hide themselves; it is not with a gunshot they should be punished,-moreover, this is not your business. Always uncock your gun when entering a boat, the unsteadiness may cause your foot to slip, and bang goes your gun. Always take off your caps when entering a carriage. These little precautions prevent many misfortunes and regrets. Not only should every sportsman follow them, but he should cause others to adopt his good example. If it be terrible to cause the death of a man from imprudence, it is equally disagreeable to become the victim of want of care in your neighbour. If you are accosted by an insolent keeper or rude peasant, by people who endeavour to injure you with their tongues, who seek to dispute, who irritate you, uncock your gun; fear

the temptation arising from passion; walk away, and allow them to abuse; the better you are armed the more courteous you can afford to be. I admit that great patience is sometimes required; yet by this will you prove yourself the gentleman and the sportsman.

THE THEORETICAL EDUCATION OF SPORTING DOGS.

"Gardant du bienfait seul le doux ressentiment, Il vient lécher ma main après le châtiment. Souvent il me regarde; humide de tendresse, Son œil affectueux implore une caresse:

J'ordonne, il vient à moi; je menace, il me fuit;
Je l'appelle, il revient; je fais signe, il me suit;
Je m'éloigne, quels pleurs! je reviens, quel joie!

Chasseur sans intérêt, il m'apporte sa proie."

DELILLE.

"The good sportsman makes the good dog;" all the secret consists in knowing when to punish him and when to reward. The showman's dog daily makes this reflection: "If I do not jump I shall be beaten, my master gives me nothing to eat, he prevents my sleeping; if I jump I shall eat, drink, and be caressed; let us jump;" and he jumps. Imitate the showman. Your words, whether harsh or soft, your caresses or your lashes, should be so regulated as to cause

ideas to find place in the habits of your young dog. The moment he can run, you should occupy yourself with his education; take him out walking, accustom him to your voice, and make him obey you. You should also accustom him early to the noise of your gun. I have known dogs, with regard to which this precaution has not been taken, being frightened at the report. After his name, the first words made known to him ought to be "to heel;" these should be repeated on every occasion when you call him to your side; caress him when he obeys, punish him when he disobeys. But his punishment should be light; content yourself with a few harsh words and a shake of the whip.

The dog is by nature very sagacious and intelligent; he loves his master; profit by this: act with patience and temper, and consequently only punish him when he does not do what he knows he ought to do. It is dreadful to see a sportsman breaking the ribs of his dog with the whip; the poor beast crouches at the feet of his master,

licks his hand, and seems to say, "Why do you beat me? teach me what to do, and I will do it; I ask no better."

The moment the master has spoken, the dog should obey; you must not, however, omit anything, above all at the commencement: but never punish him, not even by harsh words, till he has learned and understands that which you desire of him. His obedience should be repaid by many caresses; a few kind words he readily understands, and knows well how to show his gratitude. You should therefore be prodigal of kindness, and at the same time avaricious of punishment. The dog delights in flattery; caressed by the voice and gesture, he feels even the severity of your look, and a quick word is a still greater punishment. Then comes the threat of the whip; then a light pull of the ear; then a little more severity; the lash only on great occasions, and this should only be resorted to in extreme measures, in cases of absolute necessity. Proportion the punishment always to the fault, and when your dog, having been chastised,

finishes by obeying, double your caresses; he knows and feels the difference, and will profit by the lesson. During your walk, take the precaution to study the character of your young dog. If he is gentle and timid, act with much management; if he is wild, wicked, and cunning, be severe. You are his lord and master; he should read his destiny in your eyes. A word from you ought to make him tremble; another ought to make him jump with joy. But, above all, be careful to make use of the same expressions to obtain the same result. The language of dogs does not admit of synonymes; it requires technical terms, and the vocabulary is of no great length. You should occupy yourself personally with his education; another voice than your own will disturb his ideas; the inflections will no longer be the same, and the animal will understand nothing.

When your dog is for some time accustomed to this passive obedience, the base of his education, that he comes to you the instant you call him, stops his gambols and his fun at the slightest word from your mouth: you must instruct him to lie down at your command; the front legs should be elongated, the rear ones placed under him. Your dog should always take this position the moment that with a loud voice you cry out "Down." Soon he will attain this habit, and the slightest sign of your hand be sufficient to cause him to obey. Thus placed, you will hold him fixed when walking round him; when you call him he will rise, but not sooner. A well-trained dog should lie down in an instant.

He should then be taught to fetch and carry; this may be done in playing with him, but it does not always succeed. You commence by throwing before him a linen cloth, and the moment he seizes it call him; caress him when he returns, and take the cloth from his mouth. Should he drop the cloth previous to your taking hold of it, place it in his mouth again: repeat this lesson continually. The same exercise may be carried on with a stick, which should be covered with a hare or rabbit-skin in order

to prevent his holding it too fast with his teeth. He should seize it by the centre: should he seize it by the ends, do not allow it, but commence again. You see dogs which will not fetch or carry, and others which will readily do so: in the former case, you must make use of forcing collars: these collars are made with small spikes within; a string is attached to the collar, and a pull causes the spikes to give severe pain: this should be used carefully at first: if, however, the dog be obstinate, a few severe pulls will bring him to reason.

When your dog brings readily any object thrown for him, then make him bring dead game — a partridge, a quail, or a rabbit. It is only when the dog is full grown and strong he should be made to carry the hare. If he has a hard mouth, and injures the game with his teeth, try the effect of putting pins in the birds.

Your dog carries; he obeys when you call him; he understands the words "to heel," "fetch it," "give:" you must teach him to seek: his vocabulary is augmented by the word "seek." In shooting, the dog ought to go over a hundred times more ground than his master. He should always range in zigzag, to the right, to the left, and never pass a tuft of grass without beating it. To teach him this manœuvre you should act thus:—

The dog ranges before you at a distance of fifteen or twenty paces; you should never allow him to be further: you call him on, changing suddenly your direction. The dog comes to you; you make him a sign to advance in saying "Seek." This time you go in a contrary sense: you begin again, and always the words "turn" and "seek" accompany all your movements; and generally dogs will at once take to this manœuvre from the dislike they have of losing sight of their master when they observe that he changes his direction.

The natural instinct of a well-bred dog will cause him to "seek" the moment he has a knowledge of game, which experience will tell him where to find: he will then alone seek it without being told, as a dog has no less pleasure than his master in sporting.

Your dog brings, seeks, and beats; he obeys; the question is then to teach him to point. The greater portion of pointers point naturally: I have known them when six months old follow their mother to the field, and, on seeing her point, quietly place themselves behind her, elongate their noses, elevate the paw, stretch out the tail, and remain till the gun is discharged.

Throw for your dog the cloth or the stick as before, saying at the same time "Seek:" the moment he approaches it, draw the spiked collar, at the same time crying out to him "Hold." When he has remained a few moments, say to him "Bring," and begin again. You may also throw to the dog bread-and-butter, or anything else, without allowing him to take it till he has pointed before it to the word "hold." When he is on the point, fire your gun, only charged with powder, and do not allow him to touch the bread till you have fired. Repeat this lesson until he well understands it, and till

he points without the use of the collar. Many sportsmen in such case cry "Seize it" to their dog: I condemn this manner. In the open as in the crowd a good dog ought never to rush in. Game should rise itself, and when the shooter approaches quietly.

If a dog throw himself among partridges or quails, they will rise frightened and wild, and will be far more difficult to hit. When getting up before a shooter, they will fly straight. If they be red-legged partridges that the dog runs into, they will rise at once; in a contrary case, they rise the one after another. For a hare or a rabbit, the inconvenience of rushing in is still more serious, as the dog once started, will follow the animal: if he is near, you will forbear to shoot; and if you do shoot, you risk the life of your dog. In a marsh the case differs: a dog ought to rush, but you should never permit him till he is well grounded in good principles, and not until you have no fear that this habit will induce him to force his point in a wood or in the fields.

Young dogs are generally full of spirit; it

is necessary to calm them. When you see your pupil carried away by excitement beyond the distance of twenty paces, stop him with a severe voice. When he rejoins you, give him a sign to advance again, saying "Gently, gently:" moderate your voice, if his ardour is too great. All these lessons, repeated with patience, will not be lost on a dog of pure breed. You should well know how to distribute your recompenses as well as chastisements: give them at the proper moment, and be prodigal with your favours.

When your dog knows all that we have here named, he is broken, theoretically speaking. Many sportsmen exact more. The education of a pointer is very trifling: he is formed by Nature; in his youth he is so excited that he forces and starts the game, but he soon knows better: the instinct of the chase causes him to reason; he continues his gallop, but he stops when necessary.

A sportsman understands the powers of his dog: his listeners, who have scarcely believed his tales, are surprised by facts. I know a man who took a burning stick from the fire, threw it into the centre of the hall, and desired his dog to bring it. The dog walked round the burning brand, fearing to touch it: the order being repeated to him, he at length approached it, and having first extinguished the fire with his urine, seized it in his mouth, and dragged it to the feet of his master.—Si non è vero.

THE PRACTICAL EDUCATION OF SPORTING DOGS.

" Le bon chasseur fait le bon chien."
Sagesse de Nation.

PROCURE a living partridge and cut his wings: secure it from time to time, from distance to distance, in sundry grassy spots. Then attach your bird by a string to a tree or bush. It will at first endeavour to escape, but finding that impossible, it will soon lie close; allow it to remain so, and leave it. Your dog not having observed these preparations, take your gun and the wind, and with him approach the ground that has been touched by the bird. Then repeat the lesson to "seek." Your dog will become impatient: as soon as he scents the game, he starts; stop him with a gentle remonstrance; make him return to your side, and

cool his ardour by the words "Gently, gently." As you have only one partridge, and that must die in the lesson, be careful of his life, and allow the practice to last as long as possible. Tell your dog to seek; make him turn to the right and the left; and lastly, when he approaches the game, cry loudly to him to "hold." Should he not stop, a good pull at the spiked collar will instantly have the effect. Then approach your dog, saying to him quietly, "Hold, hold!" Walk round him: your voice and looks will fix him to the spot he has taken. When you have done this several times, take the partridge, put it under his nose that he may scent it without permitting him to touch it. Then let the bird go behind you: take your dog away, and recommence your lesson. Do this several times, and above all follow the advice given you before: and the moment your dog has pointed at the bird without the aid of his collar, kill the partridge and make him bring it. When the dog precipitates himself on the bird, and enjoys the pleasure of holding it in his mouth, cut the string by which it has been attached. Assure your-self that he does not bite the bird, and that he gives it you the moment you desire him. Throw it three or four times in order to make him bring it again, and recommence this practice as often as you can procure a living bird.

This lesson may be also followed up with a rabbit in a court-yard. It is not necessary to secure it; this animal, accustomed to live in burrows, will not endeavour to save itself in an open space: it will remain quiet. If your dog runs after a hare or a rabbit which gets up, he should be severely punished: this custom will cause you to miss many a shot; he should not move till your gun is discharged.

We are now arrived at the period to take your dog to the field. If he is wild, place the collar on him and allow the cord attached to it to trail on the ground; you will then always master him by placing your foot on it. The animal receives a severe shock, the sharp points run into him and soon correct him. But each time that you so stop him you must tell him the reason. If he is wild on his beat, you must say "Gently, gently." If a bird rise before him and he desire to follow it, say "Hold, hold." These expressions, or any other constantly repeated, will end by being perfectly understood, and each time you pronounce them your dog will understand your desire. When you are shooting to a young dog, fire under his nose, if you have the chance, at the game he has pointed. The bird is often so destroyed: what does it signify? such will not ever be the case.

Several of these practical lessons will confirm the dog in his points; and he will soon make the following reflection:—"If I move, the game is off; if I stop, it will be killed; and I shall take it in my mouth, and plunge my nose in its blood. I rejoice. Do not move."

Some partridges rise: you kill two or three; your dog only brings back one; do not ask him for the others; they will serve each in their turn for an excellent lesson. You charge your gun with powder only; take your dog with the wind towards a dead partridge-it is still hot; your dog will soon seek it, and will point to it as to a living bird. A general fault among young dogs is to beat with their noses on the ground; they follow their game by the track, and take it against the wind. This must not be permitted, as in such manner their scent is less strong: at times they do not scent it at all. The moment you see your dog with his nose on the ground, approach him, make him hold up his head, and oblige him to seek elsewhere. The moment he receives by the wind some particles of scent, he will follow them with his nose in the air. Partridges hold far better before a dog which hunts by the wind than before one that follows on their track. If in the latter case he point, it is only by chance, and when the game is surprised and lies close under his nose.

Never allow your dog to run after partridges: the first time he does it punish him severely. Slip on the cord, and give him a smart shock of the collar, using the words "hold" and "to heel." On a second occasion the whip must be applied, having care at the same time to make him sensible by words of the cause of his chastisement. There are dogs with whom both the above modes of correction have not the desired effect: their excitement carries them after the game, and they become deaf to the voice of their master: they require a more severe lesson, a charge of No. 7 from your gun from forty paces in their flanks. At this distance such is not dangerous; it tickles, causes a few drops of blood to flow, and the dog is none the worse. All my dogs have had this dose, and they are as well as I am. You finish by preventing this bad habit; their own judgment and experience soon prove that the advantage is on the side of the wings. But as regards the hare, running as themselves on the ground, they always hope to catch it, because they recollect having taken several; they forget the fact of their having been first wounded. "I caught one yesterday," says the dog; "why not another today?" If it be possible, you must prevent their being followed: if you are not successful, do not be too angry. The first time you find yourself shooting in company, and have a young dog, be careful to prevent his running to the discharge of another gun. A few lashes of the whip will generally in such cases have a desirable effect. If your dog, when on the point, endeavours to snap at a hare or a rabbit, a quail or a partridge, and by chance he seize the game, you should run up to him, threaten him, oblige him instantly to drop it, and kill it with your gun. If you suffer this enormity, your dog will believe he knows better than you; he will endeavour to seize your game on all occasions, will seek it, and you will lose your shots. The dog must be well satisfied that he can do nothing with game without his master-which is the fact.

When your dog has committed a serious fault, and you judge an application of the whip necessary, you must seize him suddenly and apply it. But if, knowing his fault, he hesitates to approach you, you must not call him as a friend in order to punish him: this would be a treason he will not forget. Ap-

proach him angrily, and catch him if you can: in all cases, if he flies, he is aware of having committed a fault.

Now that your dog knows all that he ought to know, there is only one thing wanted: it is to make him take to the water. Be careful never to face him, or to throw him in, neither to select cold weather; if you do so, you will make it ever repulsive to him. This lesson should be taught during the summer, when the water is warmed by the sun. Take him to the side of a stream which is not deep, so that he may enter the water gradually. Throw in a stick or anything else, and make him bring it. If he refuse, wait till he is hungry, then throw in some pieces of bread, at first near, then farther, and caress him when he obeys you. By and bye, when you find that he seems without fear, throw in at some distance a dead partridge, which you have previously caused him to scent, and without hesitation he will throw himself into the water. To finish this lesson, put a duck into a pond, and tell your dog to bring it; the duck will plunge, and the dog will

pursue without catching it. When you have amused yourself sufficiently with this chase, shoot the duck, and your dog will proudly bring it on shore.

The good sportsman makes the good dog: kill plenty of game, and your dog will become perfect. The sporting dog judges his master as a soldier judges his general. If he be a bad shot, the dog becomes careless. It is certainly by egotism that man causes a dog to submit to all his lessons, that he chastises him with the collar and the whip; but he also provides for him pleasures, which on the other hand he never would have enjoyed. If the dog could speak, he would thank you: without him you could do little; without you he could do nothing. The sporting dog loves the chase above all; he loves it as much as the most ardent sportsman. If he is such, the sight of a gun animates him; if he is lame, he will drag himself after you; if he sleep, he dreams of partridges, rabbits, and hares. I have even known dogs wake up at the words "gun," "quail," "partridge." This effect has been caused without being said on purpose; merely the expression in conversation has caused them to move the head or sigh. The dog is man's best friend; it may be said he was created for his companion. Frederick the Great was one day in the midst of his courtiers, who assured him of their devotion to his person. The king listened to them, when, at the moment, the door opened, and his dog came bounding into the room. "You say well, my friends," added the king; "but here is my best friend."

It would require ten volumes to relate the history of celebrated dogs; I shall therefore confine myself to one, as a finish. During the Emigration, a marquis of my acquaintance was received at the residence of a German baron. On the first day his astonishment was great at remarking at the baron's table an enormous dog, seated in an arm-chair. When an attempt was made to serve any one before him, some tremendous sighs burst from his breast, and he was appeased on his plate being filled. "You are

surprised, sir," said the baron, "to see a dog at my table, and treated as we are. When you are informed as to the value I place on the attachment of this admirable beast, you will not blame me, I hope. My château took fire during the night; I was asleep; my servants fled and forgot me. I should certainly have been burned to death, when my dog seized me by the feet, awoke me, led the way through the flames, and I was saved. I owe my life to him, and I do not feel that I do too much for him, when, for the rest of his days, I give him all the enjoyments I can provide for him."

THE TRICKERY OF WAR.

"La division Vedel aurait dû se trouver à Baylen: elle resta en arrière, et son absence décida de la perte de l'armée d'Andalousie. Les soldats, manquant de vivres, se levraient au plaisir de la chasse, en poursuivant des troupeaux de chèvres que les Espagnols avoient lâchés tout exprès dans les montagnes."—Mémoires d'un Apothicaire.

I have already said, we shoot, but we commit no murder. Our dogs, our guns, give us sufficient advantage over the game, without the necessity for making use of nets, gins, or snares, which are only good for those unfortunate poachers who live by the sale of stolen goods, and are consequently unworthy the use of a gentleman. The thorough sportsman, who respects himself, throws away such unworthy means, as

despicable; he would blush to take advantage of them; he even joins the battue only under rare or particular circumstances.

Game has its wiles and cunning to serve its turn: we can meet them with other tricks, but it should always be allowed a chance of escape. For instance, all the world knows that a hare, running direct towards a sportsman who is behind a hedge or tree, is a dead hare. Unquestionably a schoolboy could annihilate him. It is wilful murder. I have often met at a battue with very inexperienced shots. This is the manner in which I conduct myself, and I advise all others to follow the example.

It is forbidden, under a heavy penalty, to fire from behind a hedge, &c. Do not endeavour to avail yourself of such tricks; look out, mark, and fire.

The hare returns, doubles, manœuvres in this manner. If you miss it, so much the better for him; if you kill it, your conscience is clear; you have acted fairly. You will, however, probably say, Less are thus killed. Agreed: the following year you will kill more. With regard to partridges, fire at them as you may, you will find it far more difficult to kill them in battue, and this must be your consolation.

When you are shooting, should you hear a shot fired in your vicinity, be on the lookout in case anything may come in your direction. Listen; should you hear a dog, you may be pretty sure a hare precedes him: if it is at some distance, stoop down and call in your dog; if the hare is near you, remain perfectly quiet. Your dog may perhaps see the hare, and prevent its coming towards you: you run a risk; but if you call your dog, the hare may hear your voice and take another direction.

This animal once shot at sees no longer before him: do not move, and he may pass between your legs. If your neighbour has fired at partridges, follow them with your eyes, and mark where they alight.

You are passing near a wood, a covert, or plantation—in fact, any sort of covert: you have sent your dog therein, and placed yourself at a corner in order to see two sides. A hare runs out, squats, and looks around: do not move; the slightest noise will send him in again; let him take his course, and the moment that you think him sufficiently far from the wood that he cannot return without your hitting him, take aim and fire.

Should it be a rabbit, you must fire as soon as possible—at least if another be not near him. Then it is probable he may advance; if not, he returns to the wood, will make a hundred turns to deceive the dog, and will never take the open again, as, being well aware he is not so fast as the dog, he will soon be taken. A rabbit is often found in the open, but he never leaves the wood in presence of man for the fields.

When several are shooting together, the moment you come to a covert you should surround it: let every one take his place at the sides before the dogs are thrown in. This should be quickly done, without talking or noise. When all are placed, he who hunts the dogs may animate them with his voice and gesture as much as he likes. Let it be well understood, however, that in such cases you shoot only such game as come without, and do not fire within the covert. A hare has started before you; he has been missed with both your barrels, inasmuch as you have seen the dust fly ten paces from him. If your dog follows it, you must recall him; whistle and halloo with all your lungs; and this for two good reasons, which I shall explain to you.

In the first place, so useless a pursuit tires and winds your dog, and henceforth he slackens in his duty. Again: the hare runs much further, and you may lose the hope of finding it again; whereas, by allowing him to go quietly away without hurry, he stops, looks around him, starts again, and squats in a field of potatoes, clover, or stubble, and you meet with him again before the day closes.

You are shooting on your own ground, and you see your neighbour shooting on his. With a glance of the eye you ought to know if he understands his business. If on the contrary, profit by his inexperience. Examine if he takes the wind: if he does not, take advantage of his error by placing yourself in the same line with him. The hares which he sees will get up at a distance without his getting a shot. You will have a right wind for them: the moment they get up, stoop down and be quiet; you will kill them under his nose.

You are in the field with ambitious youths, who desire to beat the whole ground at once, who run to be the first at a large clover or beet-root field: let them go, and remain behind; shoot alone, wisely and soberly; glean; your supply will be better

than that of these bunglers. While ten sportsmen crossing in a field have put up four hares, I will engage to find at least six more.

THE SPORTSMAN'S NIGHTMARE— THE GAMEKEEPER.

"Cerberus hæc ingens latratu regna trifauci Personat, adverso recubans immanis in antro."

WHEN sporting, the most honest man always poaches a little. We are all most conscientious, that is evident; have infinite probity, that is incontestable.

A shilling ill got would disturb our rest; should we find the purse of a neighbour, doubtless we should return it: nevertheless, one kills three of his hares without remorse, ten partridges without sleeping the worse, a brace of pheasants with delight. Such are the trifles of the human heart. I have myself experienced this.

A hare killed in the clover of an enemy is a hundred times better than another.

Pain qu'on dérobe, et qu'on mange en cachette, Vaut mieux que pain qu'on cuit et qu'on achète. It causes more emotion. We live from emotions; without them we should not act. The heart beats quick, as, knowing you are in the wrong, you fear the keeper—he whom you fancy always either behind a hedge, lying in a ditch, or stuck up in a tree. Ah, the keeper! that repulsive figure saves the life of many a partridge.

At the same time it is not the gun which does most harm. It it not against such poaching that an active keeper should give his greatest attention. It is against your night poachers, your carriers of nets, gins, and traps, diabolical inventions, capable of destroying all the game on your land in a few hours. Yes, your night poachers, who sleep during the day, and wake during the night, will take advantage of you and us also.

A sportsman should have a well-filled purse, and not forget to take it with him. This purse should contain money of all sorts: the louis d'or should be mixed with the five-franc piece, francs, &c. You should understand, when occasion offers, whether

to give the one or the other: this will depend on the nature of the case. At times this bribery is useless; incorruptible keepers are found: I have seen half an écu refused with dignity.

I one day put up a covey of partridges, which alighted within two hundred paces of me, in a field of clover. This clover was surrounded by a ditch, from which a voice appeared to say to me, "Stay where you are."

This was all very well; but the partridges being there close to me, the covey complete, my game-bag empty, in an instant I could secure a brace at least: who the devil could resist? The temptation was too great for a poor mortal; I felt myself devoured by it; and I gave in to it in order to deliver myself, which is the best means.

Cæsar passed the Rubicon; I was a little Cæsar, and I jumped over the hedge.

My dog at the point—the birds rose a double shot; all this was done in an instant.

This keeper was the "Hacktintirkoff" of

keepers, the Cerberus of the plain, the terror of poachers. As a serpent he hid himself in the coverts, climbed trees like a squirrel, and there, perched on a branch, his eagle eye overlooked the fields and penetrated the coverts. Did he see a sportsman, down he came like a cat; he ran like a hare. Always invisible when you sought him, he rose from the earth at the moment you least expected him. Like a certain heroine of M. Arlincourt's, he was everywhere and nowhere, never and always to be found.

Keeper.—I declare you to have broken the law for having fired on my master's grounds. Where is your license?

Self.—You have not the right to ask it: understand, my friend, a private keeper is only a servant; you should be aware that a license can only be demanded by a keeper of the forests, a gendarme, the mayor, or his deputy.

Keeper.—We shall see that.

Self.—It is already seen. With regard to the partridges which I have killed, it is another question: I was in the wrong, I

admit: take this, said I, slipping a fivefranc piece into his hand, and drink my health.

Keeper .- No, sir: I shall do my duty.

Self.—Do your duty and keep your feet warm. It is an excellent prescription, recommended by all the faculty.

Putting my money into my pocket, I turned my back on him.—I will take advantage of this circumstance to recommend all sportsmen to avoid all sorts of quarrels.

You should be careful not to get angry with a loaded gun in your hand; the end may become tragic: it is a question of amusement, and not of acting melodrama, when you are in the field. You are taken in a flagrant act: endeavour to arrange the affair amicably, or at least to lighten the consequences. We no longer live in a time when the death of a hare will send you to the galleys. You will get off for a pound or two; often for less, sometimes for nothing.

Having returned home, I wrote to Mr.

—, the proprietor of the fatal clover-field. I availed myself of a little diplomacy: I arranged my premises; my tones were courteous; briefly I proved that if I had killed the partridges it was their fault and not my own. The wretches were dead, and I felt certain they could not appear to contradict me. Mr.—replied to me as a gentleman who knows the strength of a sportsman's conscience when he sees two partridges within twenty paces of him—as if conscience had eyes on all occasions—and the affair was arranged.

The following day I had a visit from the keeper, who was desirous to receive his tip. Of course I never dreamed of giving it: we had changed our position, and the following dialogue passed between us.

Keeper. — Good morning, Mr. Blazé: hope you're well?

Self .- And you?

Keeper.—So so, well! My master has replied to your letter.

Self.—There is plenty of game this year.

Keeper.—A great deal. I spoke up for you, otherwise the law must have taken its course.

Self.—Unfortunately we had much rain during the month of May: many coveys must have perished.

Keeper.—I said you were not a poacher; that although I had taken you on his grounds, you were ignorant that the field belonged to him.

Self.—That which also occasions our having less birds than we ought to have is the quantity of grass meadows.

Keeper.—Any one else would have been indicted to appear at the sessions.

Self.—They are mown too soon, and the eggs are not hatched.

Keeper.-Which is always disagreeable.

Self .- The mother abandons them.

Keeper.—It is also expensive.

Self.—And the mowers make omelets of them.

Keeper.—Last year I put in an action against a man, which cost him at least fifty francs.

Self.—Which omelets ought to be very bad, inasmuch as the eggs were addled.

Annoyed at thus playing a game at crossquestions, he came to the point.

Keeper.—If you like now to give me what I yesterday refused, I will accept it.

Self.—No; I offered it to you to avoid the disagreeable necessity of writing an apology to one with whom I was unacquainted. My letter has been written, and I am money in pocket by it. You are the loser; but your conscience is clear, which is an enormous compensation. If during your rounds you should meet with Mr. Azais, he will explain this to you better than I can. Good bye! take care of yourself, and keep your feet warm.

Hacktintirkoff went off much disappointed. Some days after we met again on the field of honour: I threw him double that which I had previously offered, and we became the best of friends. When he saw me in the open, he went into the wood.

You have no right to shoot game off your own ground, being personally on it. Should,

however, a bird fall on that of your neighbour, being hit on your own, you are justified in seeking it. If some over-zealous keeper make any opposition, do not listen to him, but walk on. Give him the example of Louis XIV. The huntsman of M. Popilau followed a stag into Versailles, which was taken in the court of the palace; the guards were desirous to prevent the huntsmen from securing it, but the King permitted them, at the same time declaring that a stag found on your own ground may be taken anywhere.

One of my friends was shooting in the neighbourhood of Condé. The keeper of a rich landowner came up and warned him off. Without disturbing himself, he said to him, "Ah! there you are: well, never mind! I could have done without you, although your master promised you should be here earlier. Go to the château, tell Mr. — that in an hour I will be with him to breakfast."

"By what name shall I announce you, sir?"

"The Count of Beaumanoir, Commander of the Citadel of Condé."

After having given some good hints to my friend as to where he would find most game, the keeper returned to the château. When he had delivered his message they laughed at him, and told him that of which he was previously ignorant, that in the town of Condé (in his own neighbourhood) there never had been a citadel.

The forester is generally a natural, to be treated with, his duty not being to prevent you from shooting, but to protect the crops and fences which you may injure on the ground.

Recollect that the first day of shooting is to him as New-year's-day is to the porters of Paris: they are on the look-out for something to drink—and all the world must live. The first of September is a chapter of receipts in his account-book. Ill luck to him who by ignorance or niggardliness deceives the hopes which rise without ceasing at the appearance of a fresh sportsman! Abused, worried, conducted to the mayor, he loses two hours in absurd disputes, and ends by paying a fine. Far better is it to commence

by so doing. The forester has seen you; from that moment you become his property, a machine—for something to drink. All with guns in their hands who trespass on the public grounds of the common deliver a toll, as were they passing the Bridge of Arts. In the same manner as M. de Pourceaugnac became the prey of his surgeon, the sportsman becomes that of the forester, and the traveller of his postilion. He is another astonishing being, the postilion. How many glasses, how many gills, how many pints, his immense interior ingulfs each day!

Was France populated by postilions and foresters, from this moment the export of wine would be longer possible; foreign commerce would be at an end; all would be drunk on the premises. A forester can only be compared to a postilion; a postilion to a forester. They are two beings quite assimilar: they cannot enter into any known comparison. Why has not Buffon classed them?

The moment you meet a forester, throw him a piece of thirty or forty francs: he will

prefer the last, inasmuch as it contains at least two more bottles of wine. Enter into conversation with him; be courteous and polite; a little flattery is not lost. If he snuffs, offer him a pinch; should he smoke a cigar, in all cases offer him your spiritflask, and he will accept some of its contents: the forester always accepts. Show him attention; these gentlemen love to be thought of importance: and, above all, recollect that you have before you the last link in the chain of administration, which commences with the prime minister and descends to the forester. Consult him as to your movements; he likes to be consulted; his nature is talkative. Use a little tact with him: he will very soon, without being aware of it, point out to you the most likely spot to find a hare - where there are most partridges - and the exact abode of the rabbits - the snuggery which the quails prefer; and you will neither lose your trouble nor the value of your money.

One of my friends was shooting, when a forester approached and threatened him with

an action. "Understand, sir, that on meeting with me, you should take off your hat." From the end of his gun the sportsman threw down his hat. "Ah! I understand, you were not desirous to show me your old wig. Let us see." He took off his wig, threw it into the air, fired at it, and knocked it into a thousand pieces, and gave twenty francs to the stupified forester, saying, "Buy yourself a wig if you have not got one." Both were contented.

The forester is essentially a poacher. Always in the field, he knows every run of a hare; he can find you a covey in a moment; his pockets are always filled with gins and wires of every description. At night he sets his traps; and in the morning, he, who is employed to watch the grounds and protect the crops, creeps like a cat here and there on his knees, destroying the golden blades of wheat; and, in order to gratify his gains—alas! often too abundant,—he does immeasurable harm to the farmer.

The first restrictive laws as to the right

of carrying arms in France were made by Henry II.; he forbade it on the penalty of death. At a later period, his successors made some modifications; but in 1609, Henry IV.—and I am sorry for him—renewed with severity the laws of Henry II. Several examples were made; one, amongst others, by the Parliament of Grenoble. This severity existed till the reign of Louis XIV. The carrying of arms was then forbidden by law to certain persons and certain classes in the most decided manner.

In the present day the license is altogether an affair of fifteen francs,—a tax on your pleasures which you ought to pay. There is no more restriction or guarantee to persons than the giving of a porte d'armes: nearly every one can procure it. It is a formality in law, as the stamp on a newspaper. It is one of the thousand rivulets which lose themselves in the ocean of the Budget.

The consequence to him who shoots out of season, or without a license, is the confiscation of his gun; but his case must be decided by the laws. The police officers have only the right of bringing the action, and not of depriving you of your gun. In such case a sportsman may resist. No man of heart allows himself to be disarmed.

THE END.

LONDON: Printed by Schulze & Co., 13, Poland St.

NOW READY,

By the same Author,

SCOTTISH SPORTS AND PASTIMES.

ILLUSTRATED WITH NUMEROUS PLATES.





Frequency for the Miles

SCOTTISH SPORTS

AND

PASTIMES.

BY

HERBERT BYNG HALL, ESQ.

AUTHOR OF

"THE SPORTSMAN AND HIS DOG," &c. &c. &c.

WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS.

JOHN AND DANIEL A. DARLING.

1850.

LONDON:

Printed by Schulze & Co., 13, Poland-street, Oxford-street.

SCOTTISH SPORTS

AND

PASTIMES.

CHAPTER I.

" Auspicium melioris ævi."

From the earliest periods of history, the inhabitants of Great Britain have been celebrated for their chivalry in arms, and not less so for their prowess in the chase.

As the love of liberty induced our forefathers to become warriors, in like manner necessity compelled them to pursue, for the means of subsistence, the antlered monarch of the mountain, and the feathered tribe of the woodland. Indeed, the fact scarcely needs comment, that the activity and physical energy acquired from the pursuit of game, comprising every species of out-door amusement termed sport, has, even to the present day, greatly contributed to that success which, under God's blessing,

the armies of England have, and it is to be hoped ever will maintain, over those of foreign powers.

During the period termed the Golden Age, our ancestors looked on the chase not only as a means of diversion, as by peers and commoners of the present age implied, or as a means of unlawful gain by poachers and pot-hunters, but simply as that which nature had liberally provided them for the well stocking of their larders, and the consequent sustenance of themselves or their followers. theless, they sported, in every sense of the word; and, by this active and manly pursuit-which caused them to be constantly under the canopy of heaven, in all weathers and during all seasons—they gained health, strength, and nerve, for the more serious bloodshed of the battle-field.

Dwelling during the summer months on the moorland or the mountain-top, when the rigours of winter approached, they sought the sheltered valley and the glen; no millionaire, with boundless acresno unnecessary preserver of pheasants, and consequently, in many cases, destroyer of foxes— no velveteen-clad forester presented himself in person, or by the ruinous arm of the law, to disturb their wandering footsteps o'er the land of liberty. Ramblers in pursuit of game, no circumscribed limit for their sport was marked; their footsteps were free and unmolested—killing all they could, and eating all they killed. Those were no days of entails or rent-rolls-no agents-no pilfering lawyers: unthinking, unshackled - free, wandering - merry lads were they. Industrious labour was, however, soon taught by nature to appreciate the gifts which she so bountifully supplied, and they, good men! with equal bounty appropriated; for, in those days, men hunted as they fought, and fought as they

hunted-the best sportsman killed the most game and ate it; the best fighter, having won the battle, selected the best land and kept it. Many centuries have, however, elapsed—having a bad memory, we forget how many-since that pleasant sporting and fighting era. It is, nevertheless, vastly agreeable to reflect, as we now write in an easy chair, that it was long, long ago. We refer more particularly to the fighting; for, as regards the hunting and shooting, the love of rural sports then engendered in the hearts of Britons has, from age to age, been handed down from generation to generation, and the passion burns in the breasts of Englishmen with an ardour undiminished: and a very pleasant passion it is, without fear of contradiction; but, like all other passions, it is sometimes sadly abused. In fact, the transports which excite the minds of all true lovers of field sports, at the relation of a glorious day's fox-hunting-a good run with harriers-a shooting excursion -- a coursing meeting -- indeed, any sporting details, to all a source of amusement, to most is a source of unmitigated delight.

"The Golden Age" defunct, we come to the Middle Age. Then there were kings with their horses, and hounds, and henchmen; and they sallied forth from their eastles and palaces with a noble retinue of fair ladies and bold barons, and they brought a stag to bay; and the king looked on, and the ladies looked pleased, and the barons blew their horns, and they all went home to dinner. And the next day, the weather being fair, and the sky clear, the palfreys stood caparisoned before the baronial hall, and a sprinkling of sporting neighbours and pages were in attendance, and they all went forth to a hawking expedition, selon la règle of sporting

barons in baronial times.

Then came the Age of Squires, real bona fide squires—not squires in their present undefined title, but real solid squires, with their packs of hounds, and well filled stables of hunters, and their equally well filled cellars and larders; and we are told they rose before day-break, and started to hunt the fox; and that they rode some twenty miles to covert on a strong, half-bred, dock-tailed horse, which identical animal also carried them through a long and hard day's chase, and home again. which, they hospitably and bountifully entertained their friends as well as themselves, with barons and sirloins of beef, and sundry bottles of good old port. These gentlemen had robust limbs, fat faces, and red noses; and their sporting costume was generally a very thick pair of yellowish ancestral buckskins, with brown tops to their boots. They invariably attended the parish church on the Sabbath, whatever might be the weather; and afterwards, in the society of the parson, who was always a Sunday guest at the squire's table, they drank two bottles of port-to the prosperity of the chase, in the first instance, and then to the king's health; and were termed, perhaps justly so, by their neighbours, good and honest men, who injured none but themselves; and, as this injury was, of course, the fault of the port, they were sinless.

Swearing and tippling, in those days, were considered simply as sporting accomplishments; to be d—d by a master of fox-hounds was merely to be addressed in sporting language—as our legislators, in these days of refinement, sometimes courteously address one another in parliamentary language, which is easily learnt, with a little attention to the duties of your constituency, during one session. And as for coming drunk into the presence of ladies after

dinner, it was supposed to be simply the natural consequences which followed the excitement of the hunting field: and a sound nap in an easy chair, from which issued a chorus of snores, was, doubtless,

highly pleasing to the fair sex.

The age of Melton, however, was not far distant; and it came with the rapid strides of a race-horse, as did those of battues, grouse-shooting, and latterly deer-stalking. The hour for meeting hounds was later, the horses better bred, with more natural tails; till at length we find thorough-bred horses and first-rate riders, and tails in the fulness of nature's beauty, unadorned by docking—thus decidedly, as regards the horse, adorned the most—assembled at the covert-side at a reasonable hour in the morning.

French and English male artistes have taken the place of female roasters of sirloins, who nevertheless serve eatables more agreeable to the palate, and more conducive to keep the frame lighter for the saddle—though no offence to roast-beef and Yorkshire pudding, excellent both in their way. Good claret in moderation is now drunk instead of bad port in abundance; and very white and well-made leathers have banished the yellow buckskin; whereas well cleaned tops adorn the legs of peers and commoners, instead of dirty ones. The provincial counties have followed in the wake of Melton—foxes are killed in one hour instead of four; and more pheasants are found on one estate, and more partridges in one turnip-field, than heretofore lived and flew in a county.

Young England has made rapid strides in the character of sportsman, and, as regards ourselves, we feel perfectly satisfied with the system of the present age, without entering into any discussion with reference to the merits or demerits of the Game Laws. As in all other matters of life's career, there are un-

questionably many objections to be found in the selfish bigotry and illiberal monopoly of game, and the no less objectionable manner of its undue preservation by some extensive landholders; happily, however, they are in the minority; and where you will find one man of this nature, you will find twenty open-hearted and real sportsmen, who preserve simply as a means of sport and recreation to themselves, but far more so for their friends; liberally compensating their tenants for injury done, allowing them also in many cases to participate in their pleasures, and in fact doing far more good than harm to their

neighbours and their farmers.

Melton may be a trifle "too fast," to use a sporting term, for those who have not good breeding and long purses. There is, however, sufficient breadth of land and a sufficient number of packs in Old England for all parties; therefore let those who cannot, or ought not to go there, find their proper position, and go elsewhere; sport is to be had, and first-rate sport. all over the kingdom, alike in England, Ireland, and Scotland. Good horses, good hounds, and better riders than heretofore were ever known, notwithstanding their apparent dandyism in dress and appointments, are to be met with in every hunting field; and hunting has become a source of unequalled delight and excitement, instead of a comparative toil mixed somewhat too copiously with the source of your enjoyment. You may now have a splendid day's hunting, ride home afterwards, make yourself agreeable to the fair sex, play a game of billiards, and then dress for dinner-drink a glass or two of sherry and a pint of claret, and be fit society for women, as well as for those men who do not exactly participate in your sporting propensities. Cigars, disagreeable as their aromatic effluyia may be to

some, even in a hunting field, nevertheless close the lips of many heretofore given to damn a little. Then, as regards shooting, in these days of sixty miles an hour by express—oh! 'tis a pleasant pastime to see your dogs range with a certainty of finding game, instead of walking o'er hill and dale for twenty miles in search of a brace of birds for your next day's dinner. Now, you have sport and pleasure without toil and disgust—excitement without fatigue—passion without weariness. Which do you prefer—the Golden Age, the Baronial Age, the Squires' Age, or

the age in which we live and sport?

Our ci-devant "kilted" neighbours beyond the Border, where kilts are now at a discount, and "breeks" at a premium, have also made some wonderful and pleasing advances in reference to sporting matters though in most others they follow but slowly in the steps of reformation, inasmuch as "siller" is required to open the floodgates in all matters of civilization: and this-and perhaps they are right-is not just the substance they are over fond of parting with. Nevertheless, they, like we humble Englishers, or foreigners, as we are generally termed anent the Border, have had their ages; but, like wise and canny men as they are, they have managed to terminate precisely where we began-namely, with the Golden Age-in all matters of sporting. First came their age of barbarism, then of clanship, then chieftainism; and now lairdism is the law and will of the land. But even in this humility, a spark of ancient pride still lingers in the Highlands; for there, amid those vast and magnificent hills, no man possessing an acre of land but is designated, not by the name given him by his godfather and godmother, if he had any, but they assume, by what law or right we have hitherto been unable to learn, the cognomen of the clay from which they draw their means of existence. Thus we find the Laird of Cockpen, and the Laird of Glengarry; and if a man gloried in the proprietorship of some dozen acres of swampy marsh land, doubtless he might, should it so please him, be called the "Laird of Mud Marsh." These, however, are insignificant trifles; as harmless, in fact, as theory. Beware, nevertheless, should chance or pleasure lead you to the land of the mountain and the flood, not to call any gentleman by his right name—such as Mr. M'Pherson, or Mr. Ross, or Mr. M'Donald, and so forth—but, on the contrary, let your courtesy induce you at once to address your friends as, "How are you, Cockpen?" "Hope you 're better, Mud Marsh?"

But to resume. The barbarous sportsmen shot all game which came within range, and not unfrequently shot one another, by way of diversifying the sport: on the one hand, to supply the "pot au feu;" and, on the other, to secure their revenge, or possess themselves of some snug retreat and a few broad acres which their neighbours had appropriated, and for which they had had a longing, like ladies in the family way, when it is unwise to refuse them.

With regard to the chieftains, they hunted, like our kings of yore, with much rude magnificence—at least as regards the number of their retainers; whose duties were twofold—the one to drive the deer and game into the toils, or towards the stations where their leaders were prepared, with deadly aim, to bring down the venison with which they supplied their larders; the other to assist in any little marauding party against their neighbours' beef and mutton, which, in preparation for the butcher's knife, still grazed upon the heathered hills. In fact, the chase, with them, was only a prelude for collecting their vassals for a more serious pastime in the

pursuit of bipeds. And thus they amused themselves till an Act was passed, prohibiting such warlike demonstrations for a morning's deer-stalk-

ing.

Then came the days of Scotch breakfasts and Scotch hospitality-kippered salmon, porridge, marmalade, and whisky ad libitum, like our own days of squirearchy port wine and sirloins. Then was the wanderer from the South welcomed in the North. whether in search of pleasure or of sport, from Tay to Pentland Frith; n'importe, if he could swear he had a grandfather, or knew his own mother-suffice it he was a stranger, and every house was open to receive him. These pleasant times have somewhat changed, however, since the introduction of steam throughout the land; and King Hudson, were he to visit John o' Groat's House-which, by the bye, exists only in name-would find the best welcome obtained for a consideration. Foreign importations -for we have already stated that Englishmen are termed foreigners in the Highlands-being somewhat more numerous, and consequently less select, bring, then, a letter of introduction from your aunt, Lady Banknote, or your uncle, Lord Millionaire, which will be the surest means of securing you a seat above the salt; and this precaution can scarcely be condemned, when polished boots from the neighbourhood of Whitechapel glitter in the sun-rays on the top of Ben Lomond, and Moses, or one of his firm, is met with in half the glens of Argyleshire. The sporting generation of Scotchmen, however, and Highland sports, are making rapid advances towards perfection in the craft. Like our own young English sportsmen, whom some wise malcontents are ever declaring as totally unfit to cope with those of days long since-in which opinion we must beg

leave entirely to differ with them—there are many first-rate sportsmen to be found in Scotland.

Those who annually cross the Border to hunt at Melton, or take up their abode at Leamington or elsewhere, we do not include; inasmuch as the majority of them merely return to the Highlands, as do the visitors from England, during the season of grouse-shooting, deer-stalking, salmon-fishing, &c. But herein has been the downfall of many a noble estate, and not less so the misery of many a noble Scotch family. Not many years have elapsed since Highland lairds, who possessed some twenty thousand acres of wild heather and mountain land, on which stood a castle with barely the accommodation of an English villa, and a proportionate rental of two thousand per annum-riches in the land of their ancestors,-doffed their kilt and bonnet, and bidding farewell to their adoring clansmen, sought the pleasures of a London season-looked in at Tattersalls', visited Epsom, Ascot, Doncaster, and Newmarket; entered their names at White's and Brooks's, and even ventured to send a stud to Melton. Good fellows, pleasant companions, good riders, and firstrate shots doubtless were they, but the southern atmosphere of England banished from their minds their usual national prudence. They totally forgot that although the number of their quarterings, and the unquestioned antiquity of their ancestry, might admit them within the narrow limits of first-rate society, that they could never cope with men who had ten times their means, or follow, without speedy ruin, in the same career. What to the one was a matter of course, to the other was a rapid advance to beggary, and tended solely to enrich the W. S.'s of Edinburgh and elsewhere. As, however, some may not clearly understand the meaning of these letters,

we will give them precisely the explanation that was given to us on our arrival in Scotland. On requesting to be informed as to what might be understood by the distinction of W. S. to the names of so many northern lawyers, the reply was, Sir W. Scott was a Writer to the Signet; and being learned in the law, all were doubtless desirous to follow in his footsteps; therefore, by the payment of a douceur -to whom deponent sayeth not-numerous attorneys were permitted to add W.S. to their names, anxious, no doubt, to be thought writers to the signet also, or "Wise Solicitors," or "Wealthy Solicitors," or W. anything else you like to call them, commencing with an S. We cannot presume to say what may be the particular duties of a Writer to the Signet, but they are certainly important, as it requires some

thousands to perform them.

To conclude this chapter, however, the Wizards of the North remained at home, shot their own grouse, killed their own venison, caught their own salmon, and ate their own mutton-and very good mutton it is, we can answer for: whereas, the lairds who fled to England for recreation, returned back to sorrow, and half the fine estates in Scotland are now in trust of the W.S.'s; and we believe we may refer to one instance without fear of contradiction, namely, that of "Culloden"-a name never to be forgotten while the heather yearly flowers o'er his moors-a name whose present possessor is every way worthy to inherit. And yet this laird has known even the want of a daily meal, while those who held his land in trust or agency, were revelling in luxury at his The Scotch sportsmen who came to England, however, made, justly, many friends, and consequently induced those friends to cross the Border, and share in the sports, then little known or appreciated, of grouse-shooting, salmon fishing, and lastly,—save fox hunting, the most noble of all sports—deer-stalking, which has become the passion of all Englishmen who can afford it; a passion which vents itself most pleasingly and sensibly into the pockets of those lairds who are wise enough still to kill only their own mutton from the hills which supply such abundant sport to their neighbours from the south. To them, it is unquestionably the Golden Age.

CHAPTER II.

"It's up Glenharchan's braes I gaed,
And o'er the brent of Killiebraid,
And many weary cast I made
To cuttle the moor fowl's tail.

"If up a bonny blackcock should spring,
To whistle him down wi' a slug in his wing,
To strap him on to my lunzie string.
Right seldom would I fail."

Come with us to the Highlands, and take a walk o'er the rugged mountain top, and flowery heathered hill, through many a wild and silent glen, in the rocky centre of which rushes the clear and rapid trout stream o'er many a rugged fall, to join its waters with the calm and beauteous lake. Come with us to Scotland,

"For there on every wild and wondrous scene, The Wizard's many-coloured touch hath been."

We are off for the land of the mountain and the flood! our heart beats with excitement, from anticipation of sport and pleasure! we go to visit the beauties of nature in reality, to see pictures in fact, not in theory; for Art, glorious as it is, can but faintly imitate Nature. Come with us, then, knee deep in flowery heather, and tread the mountain side in search of game. The sun is up, the sky is bright and clear: fancy its exhilarating effects on

the Highland hills, as, with a light heart and firm foot, you start on your first expedition to the moors. Come to

"The moors! the moors! the bonny brown moors, Shining and fresh with April showers!

When the wild birds sing
The return of Spring,
And the gorse and the broom
Shed the rich perfume
Of their golden bloom,

'Tis a joy to revisit the bonny brown moors!"

LIDDELI

The Castle of Meggernie, which is situated in Glen Lyon, Perthshire, a small, narrow, and secluded valley, which reaches almost to the confines of Argyleshire, is in truth one of the most romantic and beautiful to be found throughout the Scottish dominions. The house, or, more properly speaking, the castle, for it bears in parts much the resemblance of an ancient French château, is placed almost in the centre of the above-named valley or glen, in a singularly sequestered part of the country, being actually some fourteen or fifteen miles from the residence of any but one other laird or proprietor, and about the same distance from a medical man or post-office—two most essential neighbours in so remote a locality. A noble avenue, principally of lime-trees, running parallel with the river Lyon for the best part of a mile-and which avenue, were it within twenty miles of the metropolis, from its natural beauties would attract thousands-forms the approach of Meggernie from the east. The castle itself stands clear on a beautiful lawn (which it might be), and grassy park (which it really is); on which are scattered some of the finest trees to be found in the Highlands. The place, in fact, is one of peculiar beauty and interest, not only from its



eggernee bastle, ofen Lyon, Porthshive



natural position, which appears as if isolated from the rest of the world, but also from its great antiquity, and neighbourhood to the scenes of many

a bloody Highland conflict.

The house is one of those ancient piles, constructed in times of danger, where strength was the first and greatest object; the walls are accordingly of immense thickness, and the doors defended by iron gratings of prodigious size and weight. A donjon, excavated from the foundations, is even to the present day adorned with hooks, on which the finishing stroke of the law, or rather the will of barbarous and despotic chiefs, has, we are told, been frequently executed. Alas! would the ghosts of some of these departed victims but deign to make their appearance in this said donjon during the shooting season, we question whether they would not be somewhat "mazed," as the Scotch term it, and instead of resuming their places as "damp, moist bodies," on the hooks, they would probably hang a cauldron thereon, in which to make a stew of the abundant game they there would find, or mull a few bottles of good port or claret, with which the bins that now adorn its sides are well filled. In all other respects it remains as in the time of Robert the Second.

There is much accommodation, and all required comfort, to be found in the interior of Meggernie Castle, both as regards the more modern portion of the building, and also in the fine old tower which forms one of its extremities, and is divided into many good sleeping apartments, to which the turrets form admirable dressing-rooms; none of them are, however, large, which is not surprising when we consider the remote age in which they were built, and the great object of safety which the founders must have kept in view. Some old portraits, both of the

Menzies branch, and also of the Stewarts of Cardnay, adorn the walls; likewise those of the late Mr. and Mrs. Menzies. The proprietor is descended in the male line from Sir John Stewart of Cardnay, son of King Robert the Second, from whose eldest son he is the fifteenth in descent. From the second son of Sir John, the family of Stewart of Dalgarne, in Athol, is descended. By the female line, Mr. Menzies possesses the estates of Meggernie and Culdares, and is a branch of the family of Menzies, of Castle Menzies, chief of the same. The present owner of Meggernie has very recently attained his majority, and he wisely prefers following the example of numerous other Highland lairds, of letting his ancient château, and its glorious shooting manors to a noble and generous English sportsman, (who keeps the one from falling to decay, and preserves the other with the greatest care,) to residing in a place which notwithstanding its many beauties, save in the sunny months of summer or autumn, would be a sort of living grave. But we must dwell as briefly as possible on family history or historical facts, and lead on, as quickly as may be, to those details more congenial to our sporting readers; or say, doubtless in the feelings, if not in the words, of many a Highland chieftain who formerly lived on his own domain, consisting of some leagues of heathered hills, watered by many a trout-stream and salmonriver, killing his own game, and eating his own venison, surrounded and beloved by his clansmen-

"My hawk is tired of perch and hood, My idle greyhound loathes his food, My horse is weary of his stall, And I am sick of captive thrall. I wish I were as I have been, Hunting the hart in forest green, With bended bow, and bloodhound free, For that's the life is meet for me."

Indeed, scarcely a quarter of a century has elapsed since the possession of a Highland shooting quarter-a source of such great autumnal enjoyment -was heard of, and frequently spoken of with delight and longing, by the genuine sportsman. At that period however, it was a gratification only practically known to, and participated in by, the affluent or aristocratic members of society; in fact, the possession of a Highland shooting quarter inferred also a place in the highest ranks of society, with the frequent addition of a stud at Melton, and a house in the lordly west of the metropolis. The question, "Do you go to the Moors this season?" was uttered by the same voice which remarked your attendance at Almack's or the Opera. And few, even of these high-born cavaliers, of England at least, could practically speak in truth of the blackcock and ptarmigan; and then, among those, how few had pulled a trigger at the noble red deer, the fleet and bounding roe! Whilst, for those of a humbler class, or more humble means, although their sporting qualities might be of the highest order, and their aim unerring, let them talk of thirty brace of partridges, twenty brace of pheasants, five couple of woodcocks, nineteen hares, eleven rabbits, &c., as having fallen to their redoubtable Mantons between an early breakfast and late dinner, vet grouse, ptarmigan, and blackcock were never entered on their game-books. They heard of such birds in Leadenhall Market, and might, perchance, have seen them on the table of a friend, or read of them on heathered mountains afar off. They imagined the delight of shooting them; and they might occasionally, perchance, fall on a paragraph in the daily journals which informed them that the Right Honourable had, since the close of the session, enjoyed sixteen

days of splendid sport in the Highlands, having bagged, with his own gun, two hundred and fortythree brace of grouse, eighty-four blackcocks, seventythree white mountain hares, a roe deer, seven brace of ptarmigan, and three golden plovers; that his health and appetite had been greatly renovated thereby; and that he had proceeded southwards to Doncaster previous to returning to Castle Arden for the pheasant shooting, where he proposed receiving a select party of sportsmen, and thence to Melton for the hunting season; and if such were true, though it be a vice, "we envy him." They heard, also, that the Duke of Blair had killed nine stags, and missed five on account of the dreadful state of the weather-no fault of his, surely; and that the chief of Glenselfishstream, Sir Murray McPherson, McGregor, Clan Alpine Macthousand—we trust he may pardon us-had surpassed all his prowess in shooting of former years, at his splendid moors near Creiff, in the county of Perth.

But the grouse shooting of other days is o'er; that is to say, the monopoly of this most charming sporting privilege is no longer confined to high blood or the millionaires of England, though the best of it, doubtless, will ever remain for the rich. For the Highland lairds have, with much truth, discovered the value of such property, and consequently a good price is, for the best moors, still demanded and readily paid for the exclusive enjoyment of this delightful sport. Yet are the shootings to be obtained far more numerous than heretofore, and consequently they may be secured at from fifty pounds to fifteen hundred per annum. Thus the true sportsman, though his means be confined, may still comparatively partake of all the numerous agrémens enjoyed by the more wealthy, while

treading the sweet-scented heather in search of Some particulars of these shootings, both large and small, however, good, bad, and indifferent, we shall hereafter endeavour to detail, for the information of all true sportsmen, who desire to enjoy even one season of such glorious sport. And with all humility we undertake this pleasing task, yet practically and fearlessly, inasmuch as we scarcely know the hill-side or mountain-top, road or beaten track, from rapid Tay to Pentland Frith, German Ocean to Irish Channel, that we have not seen or walked over; though we confess to be no lover of the "banks and braes of bonny Scotland," save as a fishing and grouse-shooting country, and this alone from June to September; indeed, it is the most unpleasing portion of Her Majesty's dominious we have ever cast our eyes on, or spent a summer's, far more a winter's, day in. That it contains many a kind and hospitable heart, we most fully admit, but they are in a pitiful minority; and as for Scottish hospitality, so much vaunted, Scottish breakfasts, and Scotch dance, believe us, they exist only in the anxious hopes of the tourist, or in the novels of Sir Walter Scott, who deserves all, and far more than he has ever received at the hands of his countrymen. the romance which has found place in English minds, pictured by his glorious imagination, in stern reality, is as great a fallacy as the news now crying through the streets of London, which means that the insolent vaunting of President Polk may be bought for sixpence, but is not worth a farthing. We speak not of the natural beauties of the country, though they also will be found, few and far apart. Indeed, divest Scotland of its romance and lakes, including, of course, Lochs Lomond, Katarine, Earn, Tay, and

Loch Ness, in fact, that portion principally visited by our gracious Sovereign during her recent tour, and no more desolate, bleak, and treeless portion of the wide world exists.

In days lang syne, we read and heard of the beauties of the Rhine. Nature in its loveliness has to us charms and enjoyments which we should vainly endeavour to describe: and, like others, we made the grand tour, and we freely own the gratification we experienced. Yet we love nature in the truthfulness of its delineation, and not exactly as it is pictured in the lively imagination of the enthusiast: and we therefore own that, having also seen the river Thames from source to mouth, we feel satisfied that there are few rivers which surpass it in beauty-none to exceed it. We had read Sir Walter Scott again and again: we had heard of the Highlands: we had even listened to the song, "My heart's in the Highlands," from as pretty a pair of lips as are seen but once in a life; but more, we heard of salmon, taken with the fly, of 20lbs. in weight, and trout of half that size; we heard of a hundred brace of grouse, and we were told of red deer, and roe deer, and of rough deer-dogs-noble animals; even such sport as a chase of the deer by these splendid brutes. Could we then refuse, when pressed repeatedly by a kind friend to visit his sporting quarters in the Highlands? No, the temptation was far too great to be resisted; and the manner in which we broke through all the barriers and difficulties which surrounded us, decided our fate in obtaining this great source of delight to a sportsman.

[&]quot;'Times are changed,' said this friendly man;

^{&#}x27;There's a steamer from the docks, so no word of can; There's a railway from E.-square, on the narrow gauge plan.

There's a boat from Liverpool,' said this true gentleman,

'You may be in the Highlands in the passing of a span:'
Such inducements were held out by this gallant sportsman.
So warmly we replied, 'We'll come, be it in a van;
But money is the rub for a poor gentleman;
Yet we'll borrow or steal a few pounds, if we can,
Of our banker in the city, who's a canny Scotsman;
We can pay them to his uncle, the chief of his clan,
When we meet in the bothy of that proud Highland man.'

This latter determination we, of course, at once proceeded to put in force; and having been successful, with a purse tolerably well filled, anticipations of sport, dogs, grouse, romantic scenery, marmalade from Keillor's, short-bread, salmon, and whisky for the asking, we jumped into a cab, drove, as directed, to Euston-square, deposited ourselves in a comfortable first-class carriage, and went off with a whistle and a puff for Liverpool. The scent was good, and we ran into the tunnel of this celebrated sporting place with only one slight check at Birmingham, owing to the odours which arose and fumigated the air from the kitchen at the Queen's Hotel. During this check, however, we had ample time to decide on the merits of this celebrated railway restaurant—at least, as far as we were individually concerned; and we only do justice to the landlord when we declare, that it has rarely been our good fortune to obtain such excellent cookery and such ample fare for the trifling demand of two shillings, as we did on that occasion, when seated at the board with some three-score or more of as hungry and determined eaters as could easily be found on a keen autumnal morning. peut, and as much as you can for your money, appears to be the decision come to by general acclamation at such gastronomic halting-places on such occasions; and we may fairly and truly add, that if the whole party there assembled ate as we did-and, in good faith, most of the company there, according to sport-

ing phraseology, were tolerably good feeders-why, then they had the worth of their siller, and no mistake. Yet they tell us the concern is a most profitable one; and we sincerely trust it may long continue so to be, if things are kept up in the same style of plenty and confort. Ad interim, we shall be glad to acknowledge one of the landlord's celebrated potted tongues, whenever time and inclination may suit him to offer one to our taste and approval. The public, however, are fond of quick travelling; and railways wait no man's pleasure, though they may, perchance, at times, break down, much to his displeasure. So, forward, gentlemen !- We stood on the deck of the "Princess Royal," a celebrated steamer from Liverpool to Glasgow, and vice versa, in twenty hours, weather permitting-seldom the case. We had a tolerable Havannah in our mouth, and a warm coat on our back. The weather was fine, the wind was fair, and a grouse-hill was in our imagination. What could we desire more?--

"A glass of hot brandy-and-water, steward!"

"Hot brandy-and-water?-Yes, sir!"

And it quickly arrived: thus we sipped and puffed, puffed and sipped, and looked upon the rippling waters, and thought—what? Why, simply that we felt very comfortable—when, lo! a lanky, red-haired, male individual stood beside us, and also smoked and looked—not upon the briny deep—but very dirty, and somewhat merry withal, or with whisky, with which he was mightily perfumed; and he said, in a language, a few words, of which we shall only endeavour to repeat—

"Ye 're ganging to bonny Scotland, I ken?"

This was sufficiently explicit; and we courteously replied—

"We hope to visit the Highlands."

"Ah! you're on a shooting excursion, doubtless?"

"We hope to have some sport."

"And you 're a first-rate shot, we presume?"

"A tolerable hand at partridges, but we never

shot a grouse-no, never."

"Then you will soon have another tale to tell. You should ken the Isle of Skye. I have been out in the morning before breakfast, and killed four stags on Macdonald's ground; and after breakfast, I have had a bang at the grouse and bagged my fifty brace. Then I 've dined, you see, and in the evening had a cast for a salmon, and killed some twenty

pounds before night-fall."

We had heard of Lord Macdonald's splendid deer forest in the Isle of Skye, and of the grouse-hills, and of the fishery; and we declare to have seen there as fine a sight as sportsman need cast his eye on, one brilliant evening in July-viz., a herd of some fourscore red-deer. But the assertions of our red-haired friend we could not swallow as we had the brandyand-water. Will it be believed, sporting readers, that the relater of such exploits was none other than an exciseman, who never had pulled a trigger, save at a gull! and yet such sport as he thus named in Skye is by no means actually impossible for a firstrate sportsman. Having satisfied ourselves, however, that his rhodomontade, if not exactly to be credited, was amusing-so amusing, that we regret the space allowed us does not admit of our offering many of his wonderful exploits to your notice--we submitted, till another and another glass of whisky laid him snoring on the deck, and a few short hours saw the moon sink, and the sun rise in brilliancy on the heathered hills of Scotland as we entered the Clyde; of which river we will leave tourists to write, though we fear we shall never agree in their praises of itsave in a commercial point of view. The Isle of Arran was, however, in sight;

"Crowned with dense mists that shine like alpine snow, Lo, Arran's hills their rocky summits shew."

And to us this had far greater charms, and those of another nature; for there the noble red-deer ranges in pride and freedom, there the beautiful and glossyfeathered blackcock and the heather-feeding grouse are abundantly to be found. This glorious shooting quarter is the property of the Duke of Hamilton, and is generally shot over during the season by his son, the Marquis of Douglas, and his friends. The game is abundant and well preserved; and there are few spots in Scotland more desirable as a shooting quarter, being easy of access, beautiful by nature, plentiful in game of all kinds, not difficult to preserve, and easily walked over .- But we must steam on to Glasgow, and thence travel to the fair city of Perth. We have little inclination, however, to give our readers an account of the one city or the other, as many have done so before us, and doubtless more ably, and our pen is that of a sportsman-not of a tourist; yet we could tell a tale or two of both: we shall content ourselves, however, by the simple observation, that the citizens of the former are mercantile and proud, and those of the latter equally proud, and somewhat less mercantile. But there are sportsmen, and good ones, in both, and some kind, good, and hospitable fellows-gentlemen with whom we ate grouse, and salmon, and trout, and tasted whisky-toddy, cold with, and hot without, as also in its nature unadorned. But strange to say, we never could abide it; and from the hour we first entered the Trongate of Glasgow, to that of our embarking from the Bromielaw on our return to England, the smell, always disagreeable to us, never fairly quitted

our nasal organs.

So we left the toddy at 1 a.m., and at six we were off for the fair city. There is much interest in the route from Glasgow to Perth; at Dunblane we saw the cathedral, but, unfortunately, sweet Jessie was not at home; and the proud Castle of Stirling towered in grandeur on a hill from which there is a splendid view of salmon rivers, and grouse hills, and hunting fields, and race courses. Indeed it is a very pleasing ride, and we were still more agreeably surprised at the splendid view which presented itself, as we rattled down the hill to the ancient metropolis of Scotland.

CHAPTER III.

WE stood upon the bridge of Perth, kind reader, and not on that of "Sighs;" and, in good faith and truth, 'tis a pleasant spot to stand on, if the heavens be but clear, and the sun be shining a good shine.

"Across the shire of valleys and of hills—
Breadalbane and great Athol's dread domain—
Swoll'n by the tribute from a thousand rills,
The Scottish Tiber thunders to the plain."

The sparkling and rapid Tay—we beg pardon of the Romans—is as superior to the Tiber, in spite of all their "ecce's" as is the Thames to a muddy ditch. We speak from personal knowledge; and we perfeetly agree with the salmon in their selection. distant Grampian mountains form a most agreeable background to the bright and beautiful picture seen from this spot. Scone Palace, a modern mass of red stone, unadorned by the most remote attempt at architectural beauty, stands forth prominent in ugliness-amid the loneliness of nature by which it is surrounded-on your right hand, the coverts of which are full of game, with a fox or two in the bargain; a salmon river flows before and under you; a racecourse skirts this rapid stream, and no end of grouse hills rise on your left ;-all most agreeable sights to a sportsman, who, having long admired the beauty

of the scene, seats himself comfortably on the parapet, and thinks of the coming slaughter of the morrow.

Our companion on this bridge, or "brig," as the Scotch call it-we presume because it bears people over the water-was a breechless loon of a Lowlander, but nevertheless a most civil and intelligent person. We commenced our acquaintance with this individual by tipping him the value of a glass of whisky or two-well knowing how pleasing is the touch of siller to palms that itch beyond the Border. Our donation, being conveyed in the most delicate and inoffensive terms, had the desired effect, and we forthwith questioned him as to the salmon fishing, in which, though on the top of the bridge parapet, he evidently had a personal interest. He then informed us he was "peering" for the fish (Anglicè, looking out), on which we requested he would gladden our eyes and satisfy our wishes for a sight of one of these noble, beautiful animals, actually alive and swimming in its element-though we confessed to be no good fishermen. Few minutes elapsed ere he pointed out to our view, as clearly and distinctly as possible, a heavy fish, which we saw from head to tail, floating leisurely against the rapid stream; another and another soon passed on, many of which had almost numbered the minutes of their existence. How well they swam! how hard and firm and brilliant they looked, when drawn from dozens to the shore, enclosed in a powerful net, on the far-famed Northern Inch of Perth, celebrated by Walter Scott as the scene of the battle in the "Fair Maid."celebrated as one of the best race-courses in Scotland, on which the Caledonian Hunt holds their yearly meetings-celebrated to golf-players and salmon-netters, and latterly become celebrated to cricket-players, a club having recently been estab-

D 2

lished—celebrated as a pleasing summer walk to the fair maids of Perth (ugly ones, of course, there are none)—beautiful by nature to the eye of man, but made at times most unpleasing to the eye of a sportsman, (who looks on such unequalled turf as fitted only for the plate of a race-horse or the roll of a cricket-ball,) when covered, as it is, by the dirty shirts of the lord provost, bailies, elders, and citizens of Perth, who, by some unfortunate ancient but barbarous law granted in former ages, and unreformed in these, are there permitted to hang out their summer unmentionables. No offence, my lord provost, and you magisterial bailies; but dry your linen at home.

Let us now take off our hats to the bailies, and return to the salmon-better companions, with lobster sauce, any day in the week. A man is seated on the bridge of Perth, who watches the progress of the fish up the stream, the netters being fully prepared with their nets, in a boat by the river's bank. The moment the man on the look-out sees a fish, he gives the sign; a boat is at once cast off, and the net rapidly dropped across the river; and the chances are four to one that Monsieur Saumon finds his way into its meshes, from whence he is removed to cool himself in a box of ice, takes his passage on board the first steamer from Dundee, and is landed, passage free, at Billingsgate; and probably, if handsome, firm, and robust, he finds his way to Mr. Groves, in Bond-street, and thence is immediately invited to dine at Buckingham Palace, Sefton House, the Reform Club, or any other pleasant house, where the cuisine is soignée—that is to say, if he is fresh, and has plenty of "sauce piquante," which is always an agreeable addition in well-bred society.

Time and the tide, however, await no man's

bidding-be he Prince Albert or Ibrahim Pacha. The hour of four had already sounded from the clocks of Perth, when the Defiance coach rattled over the "brig," and we after it, to the Salutation Hotel, where we arrived in time to see the reins of a very creditable team cast to the ostler, from the hands of a no less celebrated dragsman and master of hounds than - Ramsay, Esq., of Barnton, formerly owner of Lanercost, and now of Malcolm, &c., one of the best whips and best sportsmen in Scotland, who delights not less in steering the firstrate cattle of this admirably-established coach, than he does in cheering his gallant pack of fox-hounds to death and glory. "Peering" into the interior, clad in so-termed Glengarry bonnets, and wrapped up in plaids, like all young English tourists in Scotland, we discovered the friends whom we had come to join as boon companions to the Castle of Meggernie, permission to enjoy some day's sport at that delightful shooting quarter having been kindly provided for us by the liberality and courtesy of its noble owner.

We will briefly pass over the enjoyment of that never-to-be-forgotten evening; it will amuse few to know how much claret we drank, or how much toddy we endeavoured to swallow, in compliment to the national beverage, and how greatly we endeavoured to persuade ourselves we liked it; enough that we rose early on the following morning, our palate a trifle bitter as to taste, we must admit, and somewhat feverish withal. Our dreams, however, had been of a refreshing nature; grouse had risen within shot—bang!—they were down, and bagged; and the reality, not in its bitterness, but in all the delight of a fine fresh autumnal morning, came forcibly on our spirits, as we jumped into a

 $\mathbf{p} \, \hat{\mathbf{3}}$

Perth britska, in which we were about to journey to the scene of our expected amusement. In order to arrive at this noble Highland sporting quarter, there are doubtless many routes, such as they are: we shall, however, name only two, taking our points from Glasgow, if approached by the west, and Perth, if travelling from the east. Railways and steamboats, however, have brought her Majesty's Highland dominions so near at hand, that a citizen of London scarcely now exists but can tell a tale of the Highland wonders he has witnessed with his own eyes, or write a sonnet on the beauties of the lakes; and can picture to the world Fair Ellen's Isle, and Stirling Castle, as readily as he heretofore dwelt on the beauties of Ramsgate or Boulogne, or, if a greater rambler, the sparkling waters of the Rhine, which, generally speaking, are as muddy as ditch-water. We humbly question, however, with all such knowledge of routes and scenery, whether they ever found themselves on the top of Schiehallion on a bright October morning, or on the summit of Ben Lawers in a snow-storm; nevertheless, we shall leave to them the task of describing the broad ways of Scotland, and tread ourselves the heathered paths, simply adding, that during the fine months of summer and autumn there is a steamer from Glasgow to the end of Loch Lomond-and a most agreeable steam it is, weather permitting, with Ben Lomond in good humour, and a sunny smile upon his summit; from thence a most interesting highland route via Inverarnan to Killin, which, though fifteen miles distant, is the post-town, baker's shop, and, in fact, the market-town of Meggernie Castle. Civilization in the nineteenth century, requires such depôts; but wait awhile, and we will tell you of the venison and the game with which the chieftains of days lang syne filled their larders, ere breeks were worn as they now are, even in these wild glens, where at least costume ought to have remained sacred from the inroads of fashion, if only in memory of "Glengarry and Lochiel."

Killin was also our present point, though travelling from Perth; and with the aid of post-horses, eigars, a ham, cold pie in abundance, and merriment ad libitum, we managed to while away as agreeable a day's excursion as ever we recollect having enjoyed.

Journeying viâ Crieff to Amulrie, across the excellent grouse hills shot over by Mr. Fox Maule to Kenmore, and thence by Loch Tayside to Killin; unquestionably, in our humble opinion, save the route by Lochearn, the most beautiful in all Scotland—to say nothing of our vicinity, when at the former place, to the forest of Glenartney, a name ever pleasantly brought to the memory of the sportsman by the beautiful lines of Sir Walter Scott, when he describes, in the "Lady of the Lake"—

"The stag at eve had drunk his fill, Where danced the moon on Mona's rill; And deep his midnight lair had made In lone Glenartney's hazel shade."

With such subjects of conversation, and so many of pleasure to the sight, the hours passed rapidly away; and ere we had arrived at our last halting place, previous to mounting the steep sides of Ben Lawers, on our approach to Meggernie, the towering points of Benmore, hitherto beheld in the centre of the longest distance, were fast losing themselves in the shades of coming night; and

"The western waves of ebbing day Rolled o'er the glen their level way; Each purple peak—each flinty spire Was bathed in floods of living fire,"

When arrived at Killin, however, we were still, as already explained, some fourteen or fifteen miles from the scene of our expected enjoyment; an intervening space, which could only, within these last ten years, have been honoured by other wheels than those of a peat-cart; yet what is there money and determination cannot accomplish? The noble tenant of Meggernie has done this much with the aid of siller and kind persuasion. Nothing can be done without the former-in Scotland above all places. That which was heretofore comparatively a sheeptrack, literally up the mountain side of Ben Lawers for seven miles, and down the other seven more, is now fit to be rolled over by a London chariot and four Killin posters. Lucky for the occupants of the carriage, however, be they not rolled over also, inasmuch as for many miles on the descent to Glen Lyon, in the centre of which stands the château, the mountain rises steep and abrupt from the road on the one side; and the declivity which presents itself on the other, to a bright and rapid trout stream, is sufficient to send an ejected from dog-cart, curricle, or britska, rolling without a check, till his head thumps against one of the numberless rocks over which rushes the silvery stream, or, if his mouth be open at the moment of his fall, he may chance to catch a trout with his fly.

Never can we forget the last hour of our journey on this, our first delightful sporting expedition, to a Highland shooting quarter. One of our companions, a most amiable, light-hearted, and first-rate sportsman—who, alas! has since fallen a victim, like many other of our friends, to an Indian campaign—was convulsed with laughter the whole descent of the mountain side, at the fears expressed by another of the party as to the probability of our being food for

the eagles ere morning dawned. The night had become dark as pitch; lamps we had none; and the Highland postillion, fearless of all danger, with a loose rein and lolling seat, rattled us down the declivity of the mountain at a sharp trot. How the nags, such as they were, kept their footing, heaven only knows; indeed, we admit the fact, that the thought passed occasionally through our mind as we neared the side of the precipice, as it appeared in the dark, that if we escaped an upset or a broken limb,

"The heath this night must be our bed— The welkin, curtain for my head."

At length, however, we reached the bottom of this interminable hill, and, rattling over an old stone bridge - barely of sufficient width to admit the passage of the carriage, underneath which the river Lyon rushed foaming and roaring over a bed of rocks-we made a sharp left angular twist, whirled up a bit of a brae, and came to a dead halt before a gate, as it then appeared to us, in the very centre of a thick covert. Post-boy descended, and opened wide the portal, as we concluded and prayed, of Meggernie Castle. Devil a bit of such luck—we had still an avenue to pass-and such an avenue! (but of this more anon,) the river still rushing by our side. Oh, ye salmon and trout! what a cool and pleasing retreat! The darkness became more profound, and the stillness of the night, broken only by our carriagewheels, more solemn, as on we poked our way, till at last we approached what, in the density, appeared a noble pile of massive stone. Not a sound was heard without, not a light was seen within. What a welcome and pleasing termination, thought we, to the sunshine of the morning! Ghosts and goblins of departed chiefs might be housed there, with little

to eat and nought to drink, for all we knew; for all was silent as the grave. True, we had despatched a letter to say we were coming; and the noble tenant's permission to enter his abode had also duly preceded us. But the fact of posting a despatch in the fair city of Perth, and its chance of reaching this sequestered glen in safety, had never occurred to our minds.

Our thoughts at that moment, however, as we stood without the walls of this ancient abode of chieftainism, naturally recurred at once to the military-secretary of the General Post-Office; and we well knew that his foot-soldiers, or "runners" as they are termed in the Highlands-because, if possible, they move slower there, and are worse paid for their labour than elsewhere-would not be alive to the importance of delivering without delay the correspondence of gentlemen sportsmen. With such thoughts, we felt assured our missile had missed its mark. To stand before the door of an old Scotch castle till midnight, however, or remain under its shadows till morning, was not for a moment our intention. So bang one! went against the door-for knocker there was none. Bang two! all still was silent, save the echo of the bang. Bang three! a double shot; when—joy and relief—a light appeared through the key-hole. Bang four! Open sesame! and, with candle in hand, appeared a short, wellbuilt individual, with a comely countenance; in fact, a good specimen of a Highland gamekeeper, and, as we afterwards found him, a good sportsman and right honest fellow.

"My name is 'Norval on the Grampian Hills,' according to school-boy recital, or any other name agreeable to you in this said glen: only give us an entrance. You received our letter, &c." All an-

swered in the affirmative; and, with a hearty welcome, in we bundled, bag and baggage. Five minutes scarcely elapsed ere we were made comfortable: a blazing peat and wood fire burnt on the heartha bottle was soon produced; but we forget-not a bottle, but sixteen blown into one, containing the everlasting whisky, we were about to say; but no, this was veritable "mountain-dew." We pledged the ghosts of departed chiefs for safety; we pledged the noble tenant of the château—this was our welcome-cup: could we refuse one, or even two, so bountifully offered? A hot supper of stewed mountain hare, added to the cold viands we had brought from the Lowlands—a cigar—and then to bed. And thus, good friends, we leave you for an hour or two, to dream, as we did, of deer and grouse, blackcocks and white hares, Highlanders and heathered hills; and if some fair blue eyes, far away in the south country, were veiled in sorrow for our absence, we must confess that ours were soon closed in as sound a sleep as a sportsman well could wish, who desires strength and energy for the expected sport of the coming morn.

CHAPTER IV.

"Awake and be stirring, the daylight's appearing;
The wind's in the south, and the mountains are clearing;
A thousand wild deer in the forest are feeding;
And many a hart before night shall lie bleeding."

LIDDELL.

Ir may be readily conceived, that the fatigue and excitement we had undergone during our delightful journey of the previous day, had left us with little inclination to explore the interior of the castle on the first night of our arrival: the fire burnt cheerfully within, and all without was leaden darkness. Having enjoyed, therefore, a rough but substantial and merry supper, and blown a good cloud of tobacco to keep out the witches, we piloted, with the aid of the trusty gamekeeper, our companions to their nightly domiciles, and then tumbled into a comfortable bed in one of the turrets of the building, and were soon lost in sleep to all around us.

The bright sun of a glorious autumnal morning had, however, scarce risen o'er the eastern horizon, ere, refreshed by the calm rest of night, we awoke, invigorated and nerved, in anxious expectation of the coming sports of the day. And we may truly say, in

the beautiful words of Scott, that there-

"At morn the blackcock trims his jetty wing;
"Tis morning prompts the linnet's blithest lay,
All nature's children feel the matin spring
Of life reviving with reviving day."



Our ideas of a Highland shooting box, we are free to confess, had hitherto been limited to the imagination of a species of mud hut, placed on a wild and extensive grouse moor. And true, there are still many such; and these so situated as to afford the most ample sport for the gun as well as for the fishing-rod; for wherever grouse hills are found, you may almost rely on the certainty of finding a tolerable trout stream, if not a salmon river also, running through the valleys. But our present locale was truly no mud hut, but a most comfortable, spacious, and convenient abode; and if splendour or luxury did not reign there, where they would have been most misplaced, yet every reasonable comfort to the sportsman was found, and that in abundance; and we must own our surprise and delight at the magnificent scenery with which we were on all sides surrounded, for a brief description of which, we crave the patience of our readers for a moment-and then away to the hills, to make acquaintance with the plump and chirping grouse, the silvery ptarmigan, the jetty blackcock, the snow-white hare, and the fleet and timid roe-deer; for one and all were there.

On throwing wide our bed-room window, the scene which presented itself delighted not less than it astonished us; as, of course, on the previous night we had seen nothing. About a gun-shot from the Castle arose an almost perpendicular mountain of some height, the lower portion of which was clothed in rich heather with glowing shrubs at its base; the summit being rocky and almost bare. Between this and the house was a green and level park, containing several splendid trees, and to the right of these were seen the stables and the kennels, through the latter of which ran a clear and silvery mountain stream.

This scene was in the rear of the Castle; and if

such had caused us pleasure, how much more gratified were we when we stood in the front, where, the substantial breakfast over, we soon found ourselves; but not alone, for the keepers and gillies together with a rough mountain pony, and many dogs, all awaited orders. Before us was a range of beautiful grouse hills, extending one above another as far as the eye could reach. The house itself, standing on a flat in the very centre of this rich, wild, and romantic valley, so still and yet so glorious in sunshine and beauty, that the very existence of a busy world beyond the mountains could almost be forgotten. Not two hundred yards from the Castle ran the rapid river Lyon, not broad, but clear and beautiful, and this well filled both with salmon and trout; indeed, so filled at a good season, that in the year 1839, a net being drawn across one of the deep pools, brought to land no less than sixty-five salmon. We relate this fact without the slightest hesitation as to its truthfulness: indeed, we could bring some score of old dames, now living in the Glen, to youch for what we write, inasmuch as the kindness of the tenant of this princely sporting domain induced him to divide almost all the fish among them; and we well recollect that one, more aged than the rest, having witnessed the good fortune of her neighbours, but by some mistake had been overlooked, called at the Castle in high dudgeon at the unintentional indignity which she conceived had been intended, when she was made happy by the possession of two of the canny fish, her neighbours having only been awarded one.

Along the margin of this river, but on the opposite side, was a thick birch wood or covert, frequently containing some scores of blackcocks, on all occasions roe-deer and hares, and in the season the woodcocks have not been found wanting. To the left was

a fine, open, but narrow park of green and velvet turf, extending for a mile, adorned by one of the finest line avenues bordering the river for the whole of its length, which, if equalled in beauty, could not be surpassed in that or any other country; almost at the extremity of which stands the base of the lofty Ben Lawers; and to the right of the valley, which extends and is seen far in the distance, are three small lakes, all containing multitudes of trout, from half a pound to a pound weight—some larger—and of excellent flavour. You have now—far too briefly to admit of

a clear description-"our field of battle."

As we have already cursorily mentioned, in front of the house, awaiting our decision as to the arrangements for our first day's sport, stood the trusty head keeper, together with the under keeper, about as good a specimen of a Highlander as the country could produce; and in addition to these were several bare-legged, kilted "gillies," or beaters, both old and young. In the hands of one of them were firmly held two magnificent rough deer-hounds, which noble animals were then, and still are, our faithful friends-though, alas! we cannot say our companions, the one being cared for by a much esteemed friend in Ireland, whereas the other enjoys his "otium cum dignitate" in Gloucestershire, fed daily by fair hands, and watched over by kind hearts, by whom he is greatly valued, known to all the children in the neighbourhood from his gentleness and sagacity, and deservedly the admiration of all who see him. As, however, we shall have occasion by and bye more fully to enter into the subject and character of these scarce and valuable hounds, we will now merely state that the following are his dimensions, taken on the 6th of May, 1846, viz.:-Height at shoulder, 33 inches; girth at chest, 34

inches; length from the end of the nose to the tip of his tail, 64. This dog is of a pale yellow colour, with black muzzle; and, from the strength and wiry elasticity of his hair, which is considered a great criterion of pure breeding among the Highlanders, to say nothing of his beautiful form and immense power, he may fairly be considered one of the finest, if not the very finest, specimen of this noble race of dogs in the kingdom, which, it is much to be regretted, are becoming each year more rare; in the first place, from the great difficulty of rearing them, but still more so from the extraordinary desire evinced, by those who follow the splendid sport of deer-stalking, to cross them with every species of mastiff, bloodhound, &c.; by which they not only fail to obtain the object they expect and desire, but thereby lose also many of the qualities which are alone found in the pure breed of deer-hounds.

Since writing this, however, we are rejoiced to hear that Mr. E. Ellis, who possesses an admirable shooting quarter in Scotland, with others, are endeavouring to revive the breed; and as we are in possession of very accurate information as regards these dogs, and have been particularly delighted with many of their feats, we shall, when giving some details, which we propose doing, of Invermoriston,

then enter more fully into the subject.

Two smooth haired and fine-bred greyhounds were also straining in their slips, ready for the chase. "And wherefore these graceful animals on grouse-hills?" we hear many of our readers exclaim. Be not too hasty, and you shall know. In the first place, the boundary of the manor Meggernie is so extensive, and yet so well provided with game, that a large party may easily be separated, and appointed to different beats with equal chance of successful

sport. In addition to this, one may fish for salmon in the Lyon, while another can amuse himself with a cast for trout in the lakes. And to add to all these charming inducements to a six weeks' residence in the Glen, there are two little mountains, great favourites of ours—or, more justly termed, large hills—the sides of which literally swarm with the grey mountain hare, which, at a later period of the autumn, become almost entirely white; indeed, so white that it is almost impossible to discern them when the hills are covered with snow, as we have seen them in Scotland in the latter end of October.

Now, we yield to none in our delight of every sort of sport; at the same time we admit a preference, more particularly for those wherein the noble animal the horse or faithful dog takes a prominent part. Indeed, so much do we delight in following the sporting instincts and sagacities of these faithful friends to man, that for hours together we have walked over the moors in company with a first-rate sportsman, allowing him, without one particle of jealousy, all the honours and pleasures of the powder and shot, while we ourselves have been contented with watching the qualities and peculiarities of his dogs when seeking their game.

On this occasion the object of one of our friends who had joined in this sporting excursion was as much to enjoy the fine scenery, as the killing of grouse, hares, or blackcocks. He therefore determined on accompanying us with the dogs to the top of Stroneuich, from which mountain one of the finest views, of the surrounding country, in Scotland is witnessed. Our other friend, who was all for the grouse, we despatched with the keeper to such points as he might judge desirable; and with another keeper and a regiment of "gillies," or beaters, we

started for Stroneuich; in the first place crossing the Lyon in a frail barque, which caused us no little amusement; the large rocks here and there dispersed in this rapid river, together with the shoals and deep pools, making the navigation no easy matter. On our arrival at the level summit of the mountain, after a most delightful walk of some two or three miles through heathered valleys, and over hill-tops, the grouse rising every moment on each side of us, though wild in the extreme, our sport, which I shall here describe, commenced; and most exciting, in good truth, it was, though certainly of a novel nature to coursers. The two rough deer-hounds were held by one of the gillies in slips, and the two smoothhaired greyhounds by another gillie, the remaining one being kept as a reserve, in case of accident to either of the dogs already mentioned. And, thus prepared, we quietly walked in the rear of the party to witness the sport. The summit, which is in parts as flat and even as a grassy plain, extending here and there full sixty feet in breadth, and in uninterrupted length,-in others of at least two hundred. On both sides of this mountain, which was covered with heather and rocks, a party of beaters was thrown out, who rousing the numerous hares there found, they immediately made for the level mountain top, of which we were apprised by the loud shouts of those below; and, thus on the qui vive, the moment puss appeared in sight, the dogs were slipped, and many an exciting chase we had. Did they attempt to cross the level, a loud shout on the other side generally saluted them, and thus were they obliged to fly for their lives along the mountain-tops. To regular coursers, this mode of destroying hares by wholesale may not appear quite en règle; let them bear in mind, however, the nature of the ground, the excitement

caused by such wild sport, the nature of some of the dogs employed for such diversions, the abundance of hares, which could only be taken on such ground by this kind of warfare or with the gun, the splendid nature of the scenery by which we were surrounded, and the consequent delight, and exhilaration, and excitement of these hare chases, brief as some of them really were-for, in truth, many a gentleman, who afterwards figured right delicately, and with the highest flavour, in a soup tureen or a hash, was doomed to die with a rush of the dogs, a holloa, a grip, and a shout. It must also be borne in mind, that these animals are totally different to those found in the low grounds, as to their colour-for during the spring and early autumn they are of a bluish grey, whereas in the fall of the year and during the winter they become totally white; indeed, we have seen them, and killed them also, when white as the driven snow; and for this seasonable change of costume they have to thank an all-wise Providence, who thus protects them, during the lasting snow of winter in that wild and remote glen, from enemies as formidable as man, in the shape of eagles and various kinds of vermin, by which they would be readily discovered and destroyed.

These hardy animals appear to enjoy the same climate, and exist almost in the same localities, as the ptarmigan, being often found on the very summits of the mountains, hidden among the rocks, or burrowed, like rabbits, among the "cairns" (so called), or piles of stones, built up by the shepherds as landamarks, or for their amusement, when tending their numerous flocks. Their means of sustenance during the winter season is also a matter of some curiosity: during the spring and summer they are more frequently found at the sides and base of the mountains,

but at the approach of winter higher and higher they ascend; therefore, without they live on air, or by suction, or on the chalky stones, on what we know not; for of roots, heather, or grass, there must be little, and this little could only be obtained by ferreting beneath the frozen snow, which in most places must be several feet deep, and hard as a rock. Whatever be their means of existence, however, during the dreary season of winter, we can answer for their celerity and fleetness up the mountain side, when revived and invigorated by the genial days of spring. Many a morning's delightful sport we have to thank them for; and as for the eating of their "cadavres," as our Gallic friends would term it, why, in good faith, we know of few better morsels than that eaten from the loins of a well-roasted mountain hare, with a trifle of currant jelly to give it a relish.

The closing evening, however, gave us warning that this, our first day's attack on the hares, must also close, and, with a few minutes' delay in admiration of the sinking autumnal sun, as its last rays disappeared behind a hundred heathered mountains, far in the distance, even to Ben Lomond, we prepared to descend towards the Castle, in order to compare notes with him who had marched to meet the numerous corps of grouse and blackcocks on our left flank; and if our anticipations of his abundant sport were not entirely realized, we had reason to expect much slaughter from the continued rattling of small arms, which from time to time had sounded up the glen.

On our approach to the river Lyon, which, as we have before stated, divided the Castle from the principal shooting grounds, we found ourselves considerably higher than the point where we had crossed in the morning, and consequently no boat was there.

The water was, however, fordable at that spot; and as a kilted Highlander has little difficulty in preparing himself to take soil, the brogues of two or three were off in a moment, and their backs were politely tendered for a mount across the stream. On a horse, we believe, we might overcome a wider and deeper obstacle than this said salmon river; but on a gillie's back we were by no means prepared to make our début, with the chance of a souse in a salmon pool, amidst the shouts of laughter of half-a-dozen breechless boys of the glen, to whom doubtless, such an event would have caused much amusement. therefore boldly took water after our leader; but no sooner landed, than bolt we went across the park, to circulate our blood-for before or since we have never experienced aught to equal the cold we suffered in our passage through this water; for, brief as was the time we remained in it, it was quite sufficient to cause agony of pain on landing. And when we witnessed our companion, who had more wisely accepted a mount, arrive safe, dry, warm, and laughing at our sufferings, we took note, never to ford a mountain stream in the Highlands, with a gillie at hand to give you a mount on his back.

Having reached the château, the slaughter of the morning was laid before us, when we counted nine brace and a half of grey hares, and a solitary rabbit. Not bad sport, you will admit, sporting readers, when you bear in mind that no gun was fired, two brace and a half of dogs only were slipped, that a brace of these were deer hounds, who frequently ran clean over their game, and thus allowed it to escape, being too high and too powerful in their neck to admit of their contending with the rapid turns of the hare; although in their running points they may bear a great resemblance to the fine-bred greyhound, and,

from many trials we have made, we believe them to be quite as swift; indeed, in straight running, many are faster. Moreover, we had not been out with the intention of seeing how much game we could destroy, but to have sport, and at the same time thoroughly to enjoy everything connected with this delightful sporting locale. Having seen to the comforts of the noble animals by whose means we had been enabled to enjoy so much fun, and had their feet, which were lacerated by the rocks and stones on the mountaintops, well bathed with salt and water, we left them to repose, and then awaited the coming of our shooting friend, whose near approach was soon made known to us by the discharge of both his barrels, which report echoed far and away from mountaintop to mountain-top, by which we were surrounded.

Never can we forget the delight expressed by this truly enthusiastic sportsman at this his first day's walk on the heathered hills! indeed, it would take far more pages than those allowed us, were we to detail one-third of his enjoyment at all he had seen, and not less so of the sport which he had experienced, which, though certainly not such as we shall hereafter have to detail of this charming shooting quarter, vet was it quite sufficient to answer all our anticipations when he produced eleven brace and a half of grouse, two brace and a half of mountain hares, a brace of ptarmigan, and-oh, delicious morsel !-a golden plover, plump, and praying, doubtless, to be To which being added the forlorn little rabbit and the hares we slaughtered, we were provided with a tolerable larder.

Should this simple and unostentatious account of game—should this humble, but nevertheless truthful, picture of pleasures long passed, but not forgotten, meet the eye of many a sportsman, possessor of a



Your on the heathered Hill.



well-preserved grouse ground, he will, doubtless, turn up the tip of his nose, or the balls of his eyes, at our sporting pretensions. We think we see him now, with a curl on the lip, and a smile on his physiognomy, at the sum total we have named. him smile on. We have—all humility in saying so -seen as many grouse fall to the deadly aim of first-rate shots, as our neighbours; but we cannot admit that the useless slaughter which sometimes takes place at the commencement of the grouse season can be termed sport; we have heard of a hundred, and even more, brace being killed by a single gun on the 12th of August. But, in good faith, the labour of the shooter must have been that of a coalheaver; and a third of his birds not worth the powder wasted on them. We prefer sport for sporting sake: and were we the owner of the very best grouse moor in all Scotland, we should feel quite satisfied with five-and-twenty brace as the ultimatum of each day's shooting, even at the commencement of the season; but in the later period of autumn, to which we allude, half that number ought to satisfy the best shot in England; and these should be killed without the necessity of making a toil of a pleasure. Eat your breakfast—then you require no luncheon on the hills; then take the rest of the day, and come home in time to dress for dinner. You may follow all the courtesies of life even in a Highland glen. We shall, however, as we continue our walk over the heathered hills, endeavour to give some careful details of many of the sporting quarters it has been our good fortune to visit; and this, we hope, in such manner as to excite those who have not already enjoyed the sports of the Highlands, to make acquaintance with the grouse; and, as far as possible, we will also enter into such little facts as

will point out to them where are the best quarters, and how and at what price obtained.

"The moors! the moors! the joyous moors!
When autumn displays her golden stores—
When the morning's breath
Blows across the heath,
On the mountain-side,
'Tis gladness to ride
At the peep of dawn o'er the dewy moors."

Thus ended our first day's sport in the Highlands. And if those friends who were far away could have seen us that night, as we sat around the blazing fire, and talked over the pleasures of the day, they would have said, as we had decided, "Remain, and have a few more such."

CHAPTER V.

"Easy is my bed—it is easy,
But it is not to sleep that I incline:
The wind whistles northwards, northwards,
And my thoughts move with it."

The dawn of our second day's expected enjoyment in the Highlands by no means fulfilled the hopes we had reasonably anticipated from the glorious setting sun of the preceding evening, the last golden rays of which we had watched with delight, sinking behind the distant mountain-tops—

"Till the moor grew dim and stern; And soon an utter darkness fell O'er mountain, rock, and burn."

The first thought of an ardent sportsman, when he awakes refreshed by the slumbers of night—whether he has a twenty-mile ride to cover, a walk to a neighbouring moor, or decides on a cast for salmon or trout in the sparkling river which glides through the glen at hand—is the weather; a fickle jade at all times and in all climates; but in none is this fickleness and eccentricity, so detrimental to sporting gentlemen and sporting picknicking damsels, more incomprehensibly displayed than in the mountainous districts of the Western Highlands; and in no part of the wide world do you find so many reasons offered for this variety of atmospherical changes,

which so unpleasingly and constantly occur. We shall, however, leave the solution of this question to astronomical philosophers; for whether it be that the fleeting clouds, attracted by the mountain-tops, suck up the moisture from the Atlantic on their passage to this hilly region for the mere frolic of spouting their contents on grouse shooters in the glens below -or that the particular soil requires more moisture than elsewhere, we cannot pretend to explain, but the fact admits of no argument, that there are few parts of her Majesty's dominions so favoured with the tears of heaven. And thus we can well understand the anger of a citizen tourist, who once accosted a Highland lad of the west with the question-" Does it always rain in these parts?" and are not surprised at his facetious reply-"Na, sair; it sometimes snaws."

Instead, therefore, of beholding another day break with a clear blue sky over head, and balmy breezes from the glen, the wind whistled, the rain fell heavily, the mists were dense in the valley and on the mountain tops, and all was damp, and dreary, and blue-devilish. We could not, however, permit ourselves to be thus easily discouraged, so we forthwith prepared ourselves by adopting a costume for the worst, and hoping for the best, proceeded in search of the gamekeeper, whom we found inhaling the comforting weed from two inches of clay, with a bowl at the end of it as black as time and smoke could well make it; in fact, a well-seasoned bit of clay is the delight of a Highlander. And while on this subject, we recommend no sportsman visiting the moors to go unprovided with a good supply of the pigtail; no compliment is accepted by a Highlander with so much pleasure as a small supply of the fragrant weed, and many a good day's sport may emanate from this trifling douceur, which might

otherwise not be obtained; in fact, we made it an invariable rule never to go on any sporting expedition unprovided with a well-filled pouch of tobacco, and a pound or two of first-rate tea. But to return to our subject; we found the keeper puffing a light cloud at the heavy ones, and admiring the weathercock on the top of the château. We forthwith questioned this trusty native of the glen as to the hopes of a clearing, and having been assured by him that, although then decidedly moist, he anticipated a braw time about mid-day, we wrapped our plaid around us, and whiled away an hour in the external scrutiny of our ancient and pleasing quarter, which, nevertheless, looked grim and dreary enough as it stood in its solemn loneliness on this dark and dismal Who might have been the architect of this interesting relic of lawless times we cannot pretend to say; but he had doubtless, and with reason, satisfied the original owner of days lang syne, when might was right, in fact, when Highland chiefs lived and kept their own as long as they could, not by right of law, or purchase, or entail, but by the force of arms; in short-

"The good old rule
Sufficed then—the simple plan,
That they should take who have the power
And they should keep who can."

Sportsmen, however, like other people, must eat for life, strength, and energy, if so be they do not exactly live to eat; nevertheless, this gastronomic sport is a very pleasant pastime on most occasions, but never more so than when your inward man is reminded by the keen, though it may be somewhat moist, mountain air of the morning, of the unquestionable fact that the cravings of hunger expect to be satisfied, even at fifteen miles from a baker's

shop. We therefore lost no time in seeking our companions, not in arms, but in temporary, though very improper, fury at the state of the atmosphere. To do them justice, however, they appeared determined to make the best of their bad luck, if such it may be termed; not, however, without most ample soothing remedies, as the sequel will show, as we found them seated around a board well covered with abundant creature-comforts.

Previous to uttering a word, save those compelled by courtesy, we lifted the cover of a dish near at hand, and beheld—oh pleasing sight!—some juvenile grouse fendu au centre, and broiled. We performed the same office by cover No. 2, when some delicate trout, fresh from the Lyon, which had only ceased to swim alive when they swam dead in the Lucca oil in which they were fried, gladdened our hungry eyes. "Nice plump grouse, why do you allow yourselves to be shot, thus to broiled and eaten? Dear little fish, why will you be hooked thus to fry in oil? "Tis very kind of you, and much we thank you." And with this passing thought, having seated ourselves, we prepared for action with a full determination to attack centre and flank, front and rear, of all the good things before us.

"Disagreeable morning," said one, "is it not?"
"Admitted," we replied; "but we cannot say the same as regards the breakfast. Nevertheless, we would thank you for a trout or two to begin with. And as for the weather, why F—r says it will clear; and of course he must know, or who should? since he was born in the glen, and has lived there all his life, save on one occasion, when he passed a few days among the Lancashire Witches, whose charms, together with those of many a jorum of strong ale, did not prove sufficient compensation for the loss of

his beloved porridge, mountain dew, and Highland home; so he soon turned up his nose at the one, and his back on both."

Like the heavy mists of the morning, which were fast disappearing from the valleys, did the physiognomies of our comrades break into sunshine at this information, as, of course, they had all the most perfect faith in the opinion of this trusty individual, which tallied so entirely with the hopes and earnest wishes of their outward feelings-viz. for sport on the heathered hills-as did the trout and grilled grouse with their internal ones. And we take advantage of these pages strongly to recommend this same diable de grouse et truite à l'huile for the matutinal discussion of those novitiate shooters who may desire to solace themselves for an hour or so when the morning is moist and cloudy, and who may hitherto not have enjoyed the opportunity of such gastronomical indulgence in its native excellence; they may also be pleased to note in their diaries the following fact, that if the weather be not exactly agreeable for shooting, it will, nevertheless, suit admirably for breakfast-eating.

With regard to the good humour and temper of our companions on that occasion, we hold them forth as an example to the sporting world, for their full concurrence and ready belief in the fact of the coming sunshine; for of all the bores, there is none so great as he who—be the morning selected for grouse shooting, deer stalking, hunting, fishing, or breakfasting at Fulham, where you expect to meet your lady-love all smiles and tenderness—witnessing the torrents fall, declares it must rain throughout the day. Alas! what is life without hope? We love a hopeful, sanguine mind; and should our bright wishes never come to pass, still are they not less

pleasing in anticipation. If the morning, therefore, on such occasions break blustering and wet, only declare that it must clear ere long; and be assured, even do you hope on all day, the time will pass more quickly whilst indulging in such pleasing thoughts than if spent in the grumblings of disappointment; and when the day is over and your sorrows past, you will still hope on for better luck next time. Our sanguine expectations on this occasion, however, were not doomed to the ordeal of even two hours' impatience; for scarcely was the breakfast over, ere the bright sun glittered on the waters of the Lyon, and all was preparation for the coming pleasures:

We have already named our predilection more particularly for those sports wherein the sagacious and friendly dog takes a prominent part; and during the previous day's walk over the rugged mountaintop and heathered vales, we had listened with no little interest and attention to many a tale of deerchases and fox-hunts in these wild glens of Meggernie: we will not, however, presume, in these simple details of facts, to enter more fully into the subjects of either, save as regards those in which we have personally taken part, inasmuch as we feel it would be presumptuous to attempt any description of that which has been so ably, beautifully, and truthfully delineated by a far more able pen. We will simply state, however, with respect to fox-hunts, that we allude to the rude, but not less exciting, mode of destroying these animals among the rocky mountain-sides of Scotland, where their death, under any circumstances, of course ceases to be a sacrilege; for there they may fairly be classed among vermin, and treated as such. To those who desire more ample details on this subject, we beg to recommend the perusal of that delightful book for all sportsmen,

written by Mr. Scrope. A brief account of another species of chase, viz., that of the roe-deer, probably the swiftest animal in existence, save the hare, may,

however, not be uninteresting.

These graceful animals abound in many parts of Scotland, particularly in the county of Perth; indeed, when hunting with the Perthshire foxhounds in the immediate neighbourhood of Perth, it has been our good fortune to see hundreds cross and recross the large covers of Scone and Lynedoch, and, in days of yore, of Dupplin, as the hounds were drawing for their game; and, what is yet more astonishing, without the slightest unsteadiness being remarkable among the gallant pack, though the scent of the roe

is strong.

Before resuming our humble sketch of the pleasures to be found at Meggernie, however, we will crave leave to relate one simple tale with reference to these graceful, timid animals, and then once more to the hills. Soon after daybreak one bright morning, at the latter end of the month of August, the keeper was quietly wending his way across the long grass-enclosure immediately adjacent to the Castle, to inspect the kennel, visit his pets, and see they were all in health and energy previous to taking orders for the sports of the day, when he beheld two roe-deer peacefully feeding near a small cover at the extreme end of the park. This sight was a pleasing one for many reasons, as we shall hereafter show; and in order to secure the anticipations of sport to be derived therefrom, with the foresight of a good and trusty sportsman as he is, whose duty, not less than his pleasure, was to find as well as to see sport, he quietly altered his course athwart the park, and being sheltered from view by the trees along the margin of the river, reached the Castle unobserved. He then

crossed over to the kennel, and sending scouts by another route to prevent the roe-deer from being disturbed, proceeded to perform the duties of the kennel till a reasonable hour of the morning had advanced, when he forthwith gave the pleasing information to his noble master, who, ever ready to afford an hour's pleasure, not only to his visitors and family, but also to his household as himself, called together his forces, and placing two fleet greyhounds in the slips, proceeded to seek the game already marked for this novel chase. True to the report, there they were, beautiful and graceful creatures, plucking the dewy grass; doubtless, little dreaming of their coming foes. They came, however, quietly and stealthily till the halloo sounded their death warrant in repeated echoes far and wide over the mountains till lost in the distance.

Permit us, however, to give a brief account of the ground, simply because we had been repeatedly assured that it was utterly impossible that any two greyhounds could kill a roe-deer, however favourable the scene of action for the dogs. On the south, then, there ran the river Lyon, which in many parts being fordable, they had evidently crossed from the thick wood by which its banks are skirted, and which is in their principal cover on the opposite side, and where their number is yearly on the increase, as few are ever permitted to be destroyed. To the north of the park the mountains rise steep and abruptly, precluding all possibility of rapid ascent; the level between the river and these mountains being probably about the third of a mile in breadth. At the eastern end of the park is a small fir wood, and thence a range of grouse hills to the left, the river still running on the right; and to the west the Castle, its gardens, &c.; the whole length being more than a

mile. At the eastern end of this ground, the roedeer were still calmly feeding; and all was yet so quiet that the slipper was enabled to approach them with the dogs to within about forty yards, when, straining from the slips with eagerness, the game was roused, and away they went, the dogs swiftly stretching for their prey. It was at first quite evident that in straight running the dogs had no chance as to pace; but one of the animals, singling himself from the other, recrossed the river, and they immediately settled to their remaining game. As long as the run was straight, the roe maintained the lead; but the moment the animal's strength beginning to fail admitted of the hound's nearer approach, the question of life and death was decided, for the first attempt at turning brought them close to its haunches, and after a few succeeding ones they came nearer and nearer, till they literally bounded at the throat of the roean unusual feat for smooth hounds-and the whoop was shouted in the presence of those who witnessed this interesting chase.

We may probably have ill succeeded in the attempt to describe it here, as related to us near the very spot where it had actually taken place; and doubtless, to many, how tame will appear a roe-deer chase! To us, the manner in which it was related by one whose life had been passed in these wild and interesting glens, was far otherwise; but then we like a rabbit chase better than nothing, and are content to catch gudgeons with a casting net, if salmon be not within reach. There are, however, other modes of roe-hunting practised in Scotland, which are also exciting, but not so pleasing to us, we must admit; and we know one keen sportsman who keeps a species of mastiff or blood-hound, with which he hunts these gentle animals through the covers for the

shooters, who stand at the end of the numerous rides, cut through the vast fir and birch coverts which here and there are found in the Highlands. On our own part we were satisfied there must be considerable excitement in a roe chase with greyhounds, and our second day's sport was consequently thus arranged: One of our friends, whose health and physical powers did not admit of much active exertions though a great lover of beautiful scenery, a sportsman in heart in every sense of the word, and a most delightful addition to the party—determined, though late in the season for salmon, to try his hand for a trout or two Another voted once more for the in the Lyon. grouse hills; and we determined to try if it were not possible, by beating in the outlying coverts, to force the roe to the open, and have a practical view of that sport which hitherto we had only enjoyed in theory.

Our plans being thus decided, with five dogs, consisting of two rough deer-hounds and three fleet and well-bred greyhounds, a numerous company of beaters, old and young, the keeper and another companion, we once more crossed the silvery waters of the Lyon, landing at the eastern extremity of the thick birch wood, to which we have already alluded as skirting the banks of the river almost immediately in front of the Castle. Having arrived at this spot, we mustered our forces, and then called a council of war as to the most effectual means of forcing the roe-deer from their shady retreat to the open heathered hills, by which the western extremity and southern side of the covert was bounded. In order to obtain this much desired result, we extended our forces; and thus having, as it were, embraced the eastern end of the wood, the word was passed to move steadily forward. We may here observe, how-

ever, that although our greatest anxiety was that of obtaining a roe-deer chase, we were, nevertheless, not unprepared with powder and shot for any sport which might offer itself for our gratification. Thus, as a blackcock rose on the wing - a woodcock flushed from the thick underwood-a timid hare or rabbit rushed across the line of beaters, the deadly echo rattled through the covert from right, left, and centre of the line of march. At the suggestion of our Highland leader, however, the word was soon given to cease this file-firing, as he justly conceived we had far more chance of forcing the roe to break at the extremity of the covert, or at least of witnessing their so doing, by steadily and quietly beating our way onwards, and driving them in front; thus the feathered tribe were left in peace, and Forward! was the word. As we slowly made our way through the thick covert, many a fleet roe-deer bounded across and before us, as if making direct for the open; the hounds, with noses to the ground, straining in the slips, as the animal's track here and there pointed out the path they had taken. On our arrival at the extremity of the wood, the beautiful heathered hills opened to our view far and wide in the distance. and by the acute scent of the rough hounds we had satisfactory evidence that several roe had escaped us.

To retrace our steps for a chance of those we had left in covert, was not deemed advisable, the sun having already passed the meridian, and time was precious in the shortening days of autumn; so we decided to walk on to another but smaller fir wood, about two miles distant, to which the keeper reasonably imagined they had flown. Having reached this point, a division of our forces was again suggested, the covert being somewhat in the shape of a triangle;

thus our companion was stationed at one extent of the base, with a brace of greyhounds; a gillie held the single dog in the centre; and, with the rough hounds, we were posted at the other extremity. Being in this manner fully prepared, the beaters, headed by the keeper, walked steadily through the covert, evidently driving several roe before them towards the points where we quietly lay hidden, and prepared to slip the dogs the moment they appeared. Unfortunately, at the very instant we were about to receive the reward of our patience, and as, excited beyond all belief, we lay half smothered in a ditch, coaxing the noble dogs, who had already nearly dislocated every joint in our arms, to have equal forbearance—indeed, as we were in momentary anticipation of seeing a roe bound from the covert side to the open heather on which we looked-in fact, as we had already pictured to ourselves in the ditch, the delightful scene of a chase out of the ditch, on these splendid heathered hills beyond, and as this very picture was about to be painted to the life, up rose (pardon me) a d—d unlucky woodcock from the very feet of the under-keeper, who was armed, and a good shot. Taken by surprise, and unable to resist so great a temptation, he levelled and fired. The bird fell dead, and well he deserved his fate. Under any other circumstances, a woodcock thus early in the season, would have been a prize; although we have killed and eaten so many of them in the Ionian isles, that we readily confess the bad taste of willingly resigning the gastronomic indulgences they offer to any one, for a partridge. the effect of this deadly report at such a moment was enough to anger—and with all due deference we say it—the Archbishop of Canterbury or York, the primate of Ireland, or any prelate of the realm. It

instantaneously scared the timid roe, two of which had actually approached within twenty yards from the spot where we lay concealed from their view, and this evidently with the intention of breaking covert right in our front; whereas three more had positively jumped the ditch by which the covert was fenced, in full view of our companion, who was on the very point of slipping his dogs, when bang went this -what shall we call it? - why, "delightful report." Instantly they all turned, and flying like lightning athwart the fir-trees, broke through the beaters in positive fear, faced the open on the other side of the plantation; and where they went, at the moment we knew not. All we wished was that the luckless inhabitant of Glen Lyon had shot himself instead of the woodcock; at least such, at the moment, we thought was our wish. Yet we might have been satisfied, when we cooled on the subject, had he been attached to the tail of the Nassau balloon in its ascent from the gardens of Cremorne.

This being a comparatively small and open covert, our chance of success at that point was at an end, and we began to despair of the hopes we had entertained of witnessing that for which, on reasonable grounds, we had undertaken our morning's rambles; indeed our disappointment was so evident, that the noble animals we still held in the slips, appeared to participate in the annoyance, as, with heads to the ground, they seemed to catch the scent of the roe which had so closely approached us; and then, looking up in our faces, as if in sorrow, they seemed to ask for liberty to seek the prey, of which, by this unlucky contre-temps, they had been deprived. At this moment we were joined by the trusty keeper, whose opinion was decidedly in favour of these

sagacious animals.

"We have little chance remaining here, sir," said he; "if you let loose a brace of the deer-dogs, they may show us the line the roe-deer have taken. I feel satisfied several have left the covert, and in such case we may still have the good fortune to find

them feeding in the open."

We could scarcely believe in such luck, after our recent disappointment; nevertheless, we strictly followed his advice. The dogs were set at liberty, and immediately taking up the scent, away they went, without a moment's hesitation, right across the wood, till they came to a rough fence by which it was bounded. Here we luckily managed to stop them, and after some little search, most clearly traced, by their tracks, that the opinion of the keeper was well grounded, and they had faced the open.

"It is all right, sir," said he, "no doubt that they have left the wood; and may be we shall find them ere long quietly feeding on the heathery side of yon brae. If not, there are some hares on the mountain sides, and we may chance to meet with ptarmigan

on the summits."

How gratifying was this information! so much so, that, weary with the morning's walk, we determined to halt for a few minutes, and prepare ourselves with fresh energy for coming events. Pipes and cigars were produced and lighted, a dram was filled from the flask of mountain dew for those who willed it, a crust produced for the hungry: and while these luxuries are being enjoyed, pardon us that we give a brief description of the wild and beautiful position of our halting-place, and then to more exciting details.

Behind us was the fir covert through which our beaters had recently passed to our right through the glen; distant about two gunshot, the sparkling

waters of the Lyon, with its tributary trout streams, serpent-like glided in undisturbed tranquillity to join the waters of a neighbouring lake. Beneath us ran a rough and narrow mountain road, unceasing in its windings and irregularity of surface, being literally one continuation of ups and downs; and beyond this road were seen open and extensive grouse hills, covering many thousands of acres, extending hill above hill to the rocky summit of Gallion, a favourite abode alike for the ptarmigan, the mountain hare, and the eagle. Little time, however, was lost in the contemplation of such scenery, or in gastronomic indulgencies; a draught from the cool and clear mountain rivulet at hand, which abound in these localities, and once more then refreshed and invigorated, we prepared, with renewed energy, for all the chances of sport which might occur.

The keeper was still firm in the opinion that the roe on leaving the covert, had descended the valley, crossed the mountain road to which we have already alluded, and would probably be found in the heathered

hills beyond it.

With this delightful anticipation, we again mustered all hands in order of battue, and "Forward!" was the word. Arrived at the road, an exclamation of delight from one of the gillies, caused us to halt; and on proceeding to ascertain the cause, he joyfully pointed out what the recent rains enabled us distinctly to decide were the fresh tracks of several roe. Thus, so far, all tended to corroborate the keeper's opinion that sport was near at hand, and on we walked with redoubled ardour.

Haxing proceeded quietly half a mile up the gentle declivity before us, without firing a shot, though numerous grouse had risen almost under our noses, the order was given to the beaters to bring their right shoulders forward; thus we faced the west, from whence the wind was blowing up the glen. At this moment we were walking in the centre of the party, still holding the deer-hounds in the slips, (whose eagerness had caused us already more than one upset in the heather,) and had scarcely advanced twenty yards on our new line, when, to our right, at about fifty paces, up started three of the long-sought roe. For a moment they stood, and then, like a flash of lightning, were off over the rough ground as if it had been a bowling-green.

At first they appeared as if making for the mountains; but the hope of such good luck was only momentary, for having cleared the extreme beater on our right, they flew along the hill side for two or three hundred yards, and then, turning sharp on finding themselves pursued, down the hill they went

with increasing speed.

Now, we have seen a fox break from a gorse covert in the centre of one of the best hunting counties in England; and riding, as we do, about ten stone, have found ourselves seated on a nag able to carry twelve, in splendid order, and fit to go. We have seen a salmon of some twenty pounds' weight, after a lengthened trial of skill and cunning between man and fish, safely landed by a first-rate disciple of Izaak Walton; indeed, it has been our good fortune, under a variety of circumstances, to witness the decisive and exciting moment of most European sports. Yet we never recollect having felt more gratification than we did on this occasion, simple as was the cause. On turning to descend the declivity, as we have already stated, the roe-deer increased their speed, and most unfortunately, owing to the hurry and excitement of the moment, though famously placed for a slipper, we managed to

entangle them-thus a momentary delay was caused. Being freed however, off flew the dogs, taking an oblique course up the hill side in full view of their This, however pleasing to the lookers-on, who kept them in full view, was all against the hounds; for on the rapid turn of the roe, the force with which they ran, caused them to overshoot the mark and lose some ground. Recovering themselves, however, with every nerve extended, they bounded down the mountain side, in full view of their game; thus affording us a clear sight of the whole chase, which proved most interesting and exciting. The strongest and fastest of the hounds was evidently gaining on the roe at every strideindeed, at one moment he could not have been twenty paces from them-when our unlucky star once more rose on the ascendant.

The splendid dog, every limb stretched to the utmost in eager pursuit, flew rather than raced over the rough ground, unconscious of all danger, but which to him nevertheless contained many hidden ones; and this with such force, that momentarily to stop or even change his line was impossible; whereas the roe-deer bounded over it with perfect knowledge of the locale. Unfortunately, a deep pit, or mountain-rivulet course, hidden by the long heather and rocks, crossed his path. Had this treacherous fence been only treble the breadth of the dog's stride, the pace at which he went would doubtless have carried him clean over in safety; as it was, for an instant he appeared to stagger and fall, then bound in the air, and fall again, and for a single moment lay as if dead. Our first impression was that he had broken his neck; and the pang of regret which shot through our heart must have been scarcely less painful than the bruises he had received in his fall; notwith.

standing the severity of which, he was up and off again like lightning. By this time, however, the roe had recrossed the road, and were streaming with undiminished speed up the opposite hill towards the last covert we had beaten, still closely followed by the less fleet dog of the two. The moment the accident occurred, we felt our chance of a kill was at an end, and such proved to be the case; the noble animal, on recovering himself, strained every limb, and showed unequalled courage and pluck in the valiant efforts he made to regain his lost ground; but, alas! the law given to his enemies was far too great; and notwithstanding he actually closed on them by every stride he took, they reached and entered the covert, and were lost to our sight.

Gratified as we had been at witnessing this interesting chase, which we had so eagerly sought, we own we should have been better pleased had we been enabled to add the death of a roe-deer to the day's amount of game killed; and though the word "magnificent" can scarcely be used when referring to these gentle animals, we would gladly have

repeated the following beautiful lines:

"Thy heart's blood is streaming—thy vigour gone by:
Thy fleet foot is palsied, and glazed is thine eye;
The last hard convulsion of death has come o'er thee:
Magnificent creature! who would not deplore thee?"

But such was not to be; and the keeper at once suggested that we should proceed towards the summit of ———, in hopes of bagging a few more of ptarmigan, and killing a mountain hare or two on our ascent.

"I will send," said he, "two of the gillies to recover the dogs; and as we have still three hours of daylight, we may as well proceed to the top of the mountain."

We will not, however, weary our readers with any detail of the exciting courses with which our walk was diversified; suffice it, we met with many a puss, two brace of which succumbed to the fleetness of our greyhounds; and then came the ptarmigan, the shooting of which birds is by no means the most uninteresting sport to be met with in the Highlands. They are found, generally speaking, on the rocky summits of the mountains, or among the rocks and stones of the mountain sides, generally in flocks or coveys, but sometimes in twos or threes, or even in single birds. They rise much like a pigeon, and often fly round the mountain, pitching again and again near the same spot, as if loth to leave it; at other times a single shot, particularly in foul weather, will send them flying for miles, whereas at periods they will wait till you are fairly among them; in fact, no game, if such they may be termed-and certainly they have a mighty pleasant gout à la bouche-afford a greater diversity of sport as to how and when they will be killed: as to where, it is always near the clouds. On this occasion we were fortunate enough to meet with them in great abundance; and had not time passed rapidly, and our fatigue been great, we might have loaded more than one gillie. As it was, three brace and a half were bagged, and one bird, falling among the rocks, was lost. By this time we had reached the summit of Lock's Mountains, when, being totally precluded by fatigue from further progress, we seated ourselves on the mountain brow, determined to enjoy the magnificent and panoramic view extended far beyond and around us.

The hour and the scene were what the poet pronounced fit to cure all sadness but despair. The glorious sinking sun was about to terminate an afternoon of unusual brilliancy; in fact, the evening was one of those magnificent closes to the year, which seems intended to comprehend all the beauties of the past. The western sky was one blaze of varied, gilded colours, the reflection of which actually painted the numerous mountain peaks, seen from this spot, with numberless hues; and when we looked on this truly wild and magnificent landscape, and turned towards the dark and sheltered woods below us, the meandering river, and the solemnlooking Castle, standing as it did in the centre of their wildness, whose turret windows glittered in the last rays of the setting sun, our thoughts wandered, but not in sadness, to the calmer, but not less beautiful landscapes of our dear England. thought of the scenes of bloodshed and lawless enterprise, which once had occurred in the now peaceful valley which lay at our feet—of the wild sports of the chieftains of the soil which we had that day trodden-and of all the exciting, happy, merry, joyous sports, now so abundantly and uninterruptedly to be enjoyed there. No longer shots are fired in anger-no longer is the Highland dirk steeped in a neighbour's blood; but all, united in the bond of brotherhood, worship the same God, and honour the same sovereign.

We acknowledge ourself to be an enthusiastic lover of Nature's beauties; indeed, at the moment of mental, as well as bodily pain, how often have we felt the soothing tendencies they inspire! and the effect of the bold and beautiful scene we looked on, was fast leading on to the building of a thousand castles in the air, when the voice of the keeper reminded us that there was one in the valley, towards which if we did not soon bend our steps, we might,

perchance, have to bivouac in the heather. The hint was sufficient, and after an hour's most exhausting walk, we once more reached its welcome

portals.

Our two friends, from whom we had parted in the morning, were on the look-out, anxious to recount their own performances, and not less so to receive the details of our day's amusement, which caused them both to regret their absence; though neither had ill spent the afternoon—the one having killed six brace of grouse, three mountain hares, and a blackcock—whereas the other had provided us an abundant dish of fish, and well enjoyed his ramble

along the river's banks.

Having refreshed ourselves by a change of clothes, and plenty of warm water for the feet, which we recommend as the most reviving of all refreshers after a long day's walk, we sat down to an amplyprovided board; and many a glass of whisky-punch, and many a merry laugh went round-to say nothing of one excellent bottle of mulled port, and half a box of undeniable Havannahs. But our noble friends, the dogs-believe us, they were not forgotten. Scarcely had we prepared for dinner, when with gladness we saw them coming slowly across the park, held by the gillies. We instantly proceeded to welcome them, when, much to our regret, we discovered the gallant animal who had fallen must have pitched against the steep side of some rock, for the upper part of the shoulder of the near fore leg was laid bare to the bone, and a cruel gash appeared across the ribs. Fortunately, however, no bone was broken; nevertheless, he must have been severely shaken-and yet, with the true and unfailing courage of his race, he shewed such pluck, that he had not only chased the roe through the covert, but was discovered, by the beater sent in search, at the extremity of that we had first entered, still hunting the track of his game, which had only beaten him by the aid of its dark recesses.

CHAPTER VI.

There are, probably, few periods more exhilarating in the life of a sportsman, than that when he finds himself, at the commencement of the season, in the freshness of early morning, on the heathered mountain, prepared for his first day's grouse shooting.

"At the peep of dawn, o'er the dewy moors,
For the sportsmen have mounted the topmost crags,
And the fleet dogs bound o'er the mossy hags,
And the mist clears off, as the lagging sun
With his first ray gleams on the glancing gun:
And the startled grouse and the blackcock spring,
At the well-known report, on whirring wing."

Not that we pretend to be an advocate for the general habit, adopted by many, of commencing a day's shooting at an unreasonably early hour, and which is by some considered so absolutely necessary

to obtain sport.

There is a sort of faintness of the inner man experienced before the sun is well o'er the horizon, which dims the sight, wearies the limbs, unsteadies the hand, and consequently unsettles the aim ere you get well into the business of the day; and we therefore humbly declare, on our own part at least, that, not having taken out a licence to sell game, and the quality of the sport, not the quantity bagged, being our object when enjoying such delights, we have never been able to discover the utility of walking

through wet turnips with an empty stomach, or on the dewy moors with a ravenous appetite, and eyes

like a five-days'-old puppy-dog, half open.

If you have to meet a pack of hounds some twenty miles from home, get up as early as you please; at all events, be in ample time to see them thrown into covert; not, however, without fully preparing your inward, as well as your outward, man for coming events. Should you chance, on the other hand, to find yourself comfortably located in a Highland shooting quarter, there is no reason on earth, or on the moors, why you should not take the matter as you do other pleasures in life, that is, obtain all the enjoyments within the range of possibility, and eschew all the inconveniences. By following this principle, if you are not a gainer, you will never be a loser. On our arrival at a sporting abode, which hitherto we may not have had the pleasure of visiting, if the time be night, we turn in comfortably (even the French make use of the word "comfortable" in these days, though their application of it proves an entire ignorance of its meaning): if we awake early, we immediately turn out and take a peep from the window—in the first place to inspect the state of the weather, and then to seek a knowledge of the locale. Should we have a decided object, well and good, we prepare for the occasion: if not, we fairly ensconce ourselves once more between the sheets, and ruminate a little, half-dreaming over our expected day's sport by anticipation, and then turn round and have another sound nap, just to recruit our limbs for the mountain sides. Indeed, we know a first-rate shot, in fact, a superior sportsman, whether with the gun, fishing-rod, or bridle in hand, who visits the Highlands annually. He makes his appearance about half-past ten, or eleven; eats his morning meal

peacefully, plentifully, and with evident enjoyment; then lights his Havannah, and about mid-day finds himself knee deep in the flowery heather. condole with the unfortunate grouse, ptarmigan, or blackcock, who have the temerity to rise within distance of his unerring aim: their rise is but to fall again for ever. He shoots on steadily till the sun sinks behind the western mountains; then lights another fragrant weed, and turns his step homewards; appears dressed and cool at the dinner table, and is a most lively and agreeable companion; and when the game-book is brought in for an entry of the day's sport, few can ever number the total bagged that he can. This is the sort of man to have as a companion in a Highland shooting quarter; not your restless, quicksilvery fellow, who can neither take his own "ease at his inn," nor will he allow any one else to do so-who gets up before sunrise, and is, consequently, dead beat before it has crossed the meridian; and, instead of really enjoying a day's sport, a cool bottle of claret after dinner, qualified by a tumbler of mountain dew, "hot, with," and perhaps just one cigar to prevent indigestion, or a little moderate "vingt-et-un" to pass the evening merrily, quits the table for an arm-chair, and in five minutes is snoring like a buffalo. Sportsmen, permit us to recommend your taking it easy—as the midshipman of that name so justly advised and practised-whether it be in the turnips in September or on the moors in August. This is the plan we have hitherto pursued, and we have found it to be both successful and agreeable, notwithstanding all that has been said and written about the want of scent after mid-day.

On the morning subsequent to our chase of the roe-deer—which, unfortunately was to be our last at Meggernie on that occasion, having engaged ourselves to visit other friendly quarters-we had determined take a sort of rambling excursion all over the hills around and in the immediate neighbourhood of the Castle, and with this arrangement the whole party were luckily well pleased. Having, therefore, as usual, made sad havoc among the dainties which were bountifully spread before us, we prepared ourselves for another day of entire enjoy-ment. Human thoughts will, however, wander, in the best regulated brain, which unquestionably ours is not; and we could never divest our mind, as we sat at the bountiful board, of the idea, that could the founder of that ancient pile, in which we were then so happily domiciled, but walk into the room at the very moment we were about to plunge a fork into the breast of a cold grouse, or in the act of lifting up the cover of some smoking dainty, the chieftain's hand might chance to seek the sharp skeinduh, and play with us the same trick we were playing with the game. To add to this wandering of our imagination the portrait of some grim old laird, with long and flaxen curly wig (evidently one of his descendants), whose physiognomy was adorned by an ancient gilded frame, scowled at us, as we sat in our usual seat, face to face with the old gentleman. The tip of his nose appeared to change colour at every morsel we ate, and at times so startled us, that we were literally on the point of jumping up and laying hold of the back of the chair for protection; and on one occasion we were nearly choked by the backbone of a trout, when admiring the frill of his shirt.

We must proceed, however, on our sporting walk, instead of dwelling on the family portraits of the Stewarts of Glen Lyon, or the matutinal dainties of Meggernie Castle. Nevertheless, as there are already

Meggernie "stakes" at the Liverpool meeting, we see no reason why there should not be potage à la Meggernie in the glen. We shall, however, say no more on this international subject, otherwise we may be taken for a gastronomist, which we are not, instead of an enthusiastic sportsman, which we really are. Indeed, we already fancy we hear some good-natured Norfolk or Hampshire squire, who has killed his twenty brace of partridges in the morning, and is snoozing over the "Sporting Mag" in the evening, exclaiming, "D-d"—no, we never swear, "Devilish fat and lazy fellow this must be, who lays down the law so decidedly about early rising and gormandizing; who gets up at eleven, stuffs himself, and looks at the old family pictures till twelve, and then calls it taking it easy." You are in error squire, be cool! we are neither fat nor lazy; we weigh nine stone three pounds in tops and unmentionables, and just nine stone in nankeens; we eat less than most men; and though we do not rise early, we go to bed late, and never could sleep after dinner. Twenty miles to cover with you any day you please. But now to the hills; come and take another walk with your fat, lazy friend; he heartily offers you a share of the sport.

Once more the keeper, and the gallant-looking fellow, his aid (who, by-the-bye, had he been in any station but that of a keeper, we should have endeavoured to have enlisted as a life-guardsman; for in his kilt he looked well enough, but in the cuirass, and mounted on one of those unequalled black chargers which adorn the portals of the Horse Guards, he would have been a fit escort for our Lady the Queen) awaited our commands for the day's

march.

[&]quot;Good morning, Donald; splendid weather

for the hills! What luck shall we have to-

day ?"

"Yes, sir, 'tis a braw season. May-be we shall meet with some blackcock behind the garden dyke; I saw at least fifty of them this morning, feeding, soon after daybreak."

"The devil you did! Why were we not

called?"

He laughed in reply, as much as to say, "It would have been of no avail," He was right, he would have called in vain.

"Then let us try for these birds at once."

And away we went. Our party was strong: we had four guns, a host of gillies, and two brace of dogs, who, notwithstanding their exertions of the day previous, were tolerably fresh and full of spirit, save the gallant Bran, who, though suffering from his severe injury, was nevertheless all eagerness to be of the party; this, however, we valued him too much

to permit.

We had reached the wall before alluded to, within fifty yards, when we felt ourselves seized by the shoulder in Donald's powerful grip. "There they are!" said he. "Hist! hist!" and the whole party were made to understand that the game were in sight. And a pretty view for a sportsman's eye, in good truth, it afforded! In a sort of stubble fieldif stubble it can be termed, in such a wild valley as there presented itself - about half gun-shot from the wall, we beheld what seemed, to the eye of an inexperienced sportsman-or, we should rather say, to a sportsman unaccustomed to this species of game -a multitude of large ravens, employing themselves in gleaning. On a nearer inspection, however, these ravens appeared to have curly tails, adorned with a white feather or two intermixed, as a relief to their gloomy blackness. There they remained, these proud and plump Highland blackamoors, as if waiting in defiance of attack, and determined to resist our rude intrusion on their feeding territory. Luckily, however, it was not our first acquaintance with their peculiarities, and those of the glen, by whom we were accompanied, were up to all the trickery and cunning of those splendid birds. We crave one moment while we add, though we know not why, that it appears, by general sporting acquiescence, permitted to shoot a blackcock how you can, when you can, and wherever you find him. Now, were we to see a pheasant sitting on the top of a park-wall, which we frequently have seen, none but a poacher or a pot-hunter would deign to fire at the beautiful bird till it "fluttered in the air;" but with the blackcock,

C'est autre chose: Bang when you can, and over it goes.

Precaution and silence was, therefore, the word of command, in order to secure success. Luck, for the time, placed us in a good position; and, having crept up to the wall, we rested our double-barrels on the top, within twenty yards of the formidable black army; in fact, we managed just comfortably to bring five glossy heads along the sight, and, with nervous excitement, were on the very point of pulling the trigger, when a confounded gillie sneezed-only sneezed-but it was a detestable sneeze: we have hated people with colds ever since. This was enough; the whole pack rose in a dense cloud-not a moment was to be lost. Instead of the murderous aim we had chosen, as we thought, so cunningly, we had no alternative but that of banging into the centre of the flock. Down came two black bodies, plump, like coals from the heavens! Bang! bang! went the file firing, from right to left; over

the wall we jumped, keepers, gillies, shooters and all, to pick up the dead and make prisoners of the wounded. This, however, proved not so easy a matter as might be supposed; two lay dead as hammers-a simile we cannot explain; three others were only legged or winged, and they made a desperate attempt to escape; but the pack of bipeds, all eager for their prey, were too strong for them; and after floundering, ankle deep in swamp, over flowery heather and rough stones, all were at length captured in life, and bagged in death-two brace and a half, no bad commencement for the day; though the skirmishing which obtained the victory might not have been exactly in sporting règle. Never mind grumblers: it caused much mirth, and pardon for the sneezer. True, we had expected at least six brace; but we are easily satisfied—the half loaf contents us; and on the party walked, hoping for better luck next time.

Having reached the mountain slopes, hares rose here and there and every where, before and around us; and we succeeded in killing two brace, after some very interesting runs. On our arrival at the summit of the mountain, the day, which hitherto had been cloudy, dark, and misty, became brilliant and clear, the sun bursting forth in unrivalled splendour; and the view of a hundred mountains seen almost to the summit of Ben Nevis, the wide, darklooking, and extensive grouse ground and valleys, which lay in solemn grandeur at our feet, was a picture of unequalled interest alike to the sportsman, artist, and lover of nature's wildness. Add to this the calm waters of Loch Rannoch, nearly twelve miles in length, and two of general breadth, which lay, as it appeared, almost at the foot of the mountain on which we stood; and though literally two

miles distant, the mountain shadows on its waters were quite distinct, so still and placid was all around. This beautiful lake, glittering and sparkling ever and anon, as the sun's rays, darkened by a passing cloud which swept through the heavens, left on its unruffled surface gloomy and flittering shadows, is the resort of a large-sized trout, probably not delicate-eating, but affording ample sport with the rod. And many there are who eagerly seek permission to try their skill with the fly, from the owners of the extensive shooting grounds by which it is surrounded; the principal one being the Earl of Mansfield, who rents the moors immediately contiguous to Meggernie, for which he pays a large annual rent. In this desirable sporting possession he succeeded Lord Grantley; and although we believe his first season of sport did not average his expectations, yet during those which have followed, though his outlay may be large, the total of his game-book has been most ample.

Loch Rannoch is bordered on the north by a long lone eminence of gentle slope, regular and unbroken outline; whereas the hills to the south are higher and more abrupt, and stand distinctly apart the one from the other. Of all these beautiful scenes, nature tendered us a superb and truly interesting picture; but time did not admit our dwelling on such pleasing objects, though long could we have lingered on such

a spot.

The chirping grouse and silvery ptarmigan awaited our coming near at hand most courteously, just granting us sufficient time to admire mountain, valley, and lake, as we walked on, and they were severally pointed out to us and named by the keepers (their denominations, however, are utterly beyond the power of a sportsman's pen to write); the still-

ness of the scene being alone disturbed as the echoing shot, reverberating from hill to hill, told a tale of death to the feathered tribe. Among these we were fortunate enough to number several golden ploverswithout exception, in our humble opinion, the most delicious morsel that ever was placed before a delicate appetite, and no bad finish for a hungry sportsman who has duly attended to the substantials after a long day's walk. Readers, should you not hitherto have tasted this little well-flavoured bird-always an acquisition to a game-bag-do us, the favour, and vourself the enjoyment, to follow Mrs. Kitchener's advice, viz., to kill one the first opportunity; and having killed it, should your establishment not be blessed with a cook— of course we do not mean one of those fat females in petticoats who most unjustly defame the cognomen, but a cook-why, write a civil note to "Soyer," and ask for his brief attention to the succulent little animal; then eat it, and wash the delicious nutriment down with a glass or two of Lafitte, if you have any-if not, Château Margeaux will answer the purpose; and then send us a dozen or two, if you like, for the hint, as we shall then be ill repaid for the pleasure you will have derived. But we must walk on, for the day advances which was our last on the hills of Meggernie.

As we reached the summit of another portion of the Schiehallion range, where the ground was covered with large stones and rocks intermixed with the heather, surmounted by a cairn, the shepherds' handiwork, we were gratified by the sight of numerous mountain hares scudding up the declivities. A few of these we were fortunate enough to tumble over, (they make good soup, but eat better as a roast, recollect), and, among others, we witnessed a very strong, large fellow make direct for the cairn. Higher

he could not go, and descend towards the valley on the opposite side he certainly did not: we therefore reasonably surmised that he must have taken refuge among the loose stones; and such proving to be the case, the grey old gentleman was quietly removed from his retreat by the hind legs, and snugly deposited in a covered basket, with all the energies of life unharmed: and this with the intention that he should afford us a little amusement in the lowlands, as we shall hereafter explain. A flight of blackcocks also passed directly over our heads, as we were descending, towards evening, through the heathered valley leading towards the Castle. We had at the very moment fired at a grouse, and were consequently in the act of reloading the discharged barrel, when these black gentlemen fluttered, or, more properly speaking, sailed through the heavens immediately aloft. We had scarcely sufficient time to raise the gun to the shoulder, take a hasty aim, and fire; in fact, the shot was one almost at hazard, point blank to the skies, at least sixty-five to seventy yards distant. To our astonishment and gratification, nevertheless, down came, with a startling thump, the most beautiful in plumage and largest blackcock we have ever beheld, before or since. So large, so fat and heavy was he, that, stewed with onions-no bad dish, by the bye-he might have graced the bottom of the Lord Mayor's table at a civic feast, and been taken for a boiled turkey with celery; or, à la broche, would not have failed the palate of an alderman. We decided otherwise, however; and, instead of stuffing ourselves with him, we graciously permitted him to be stuffed; and he now figures in a glass-case, mourning for himself, doubtless, in his glossy black coat, and looking so lively, that, were his glass cage but

broken, he would surely take wing once more, and fly to meet his mate amid the dark recesses of Ben Lawers.

When the day had nearly closed, we found ourselves again on the grassy park immediately fronting the Castle; and as the fast receding light of an autumnal evening left us but little time for consideration, we determined at once to settle our affairs with the gentleman in the basket, whom we had removed from his stony hiding-place. Among the canine race then enjoying a sejour in the Meggernie kennels, were two well-bred greyhound pups. had hitherto scarcely ever seen a hare; certainly they had never tasted the excitement of an actual We determined therefore on forthwith granting them this pleasing amusement, with the true spirit of "doing to others, &c.," and we certainly had had our quantum of sport: ergo, the aspirants for future fame at Altcar were produced and secured in slips, and a graceful pair of puppies indeed were they! On the cover of the basket being lifted, away went puss, without hesitation, doubtless nothing loth-like what shall we say? like the diable?-no! but like an uncommonly strong and speedy hare, who had been well frightened, but not injured or disheartened, by a few hours' imprisonment. The slips were loosed: Nature taught the rest, and away flew the puppies, proving well their good breeding by stamina and fleetness. Twice had the snow-white hare been turned, when again she stretched before her eager pursuers, immediately in front of the Castle where we stood, as if determined to swim for life across the river, rather than die by such young foes--when lo! a new enemy appeared on the field of action, who soon decided the question. The scene was truly one of amusement: we had at

the moment entirely forgotten that, previous to leaving the Castle in the morning, a favourite and first-rate greyhound bitch, then heavy with pup, had been left in one of the rooms fronting the park, where the chase was then proceeding. The window of this room had unfortunately been left open, inasmuch as, being from eighteen to twenty feet from the ground, it was never imagined that an animal in her state would endeavour to escape therefrom: nevertheless, we were deceived; she managed, on hearing the halloos which sounded through the glen as encouragement to the young dogs, to raise herself on her hind legs and look out. The scene which presented itself was doubtless most satisfactory to her mind, for not a moment did she hesitate. Out from the window she sprang, heavy as she was, and alighted without injury on her feet: a few strides she made across the park, straight for the hare, which was running at right angles to her. They met, and in an instant it was flung high in the air. Breathless with astonishment, the pups stopped their rapid career, and gazed on the lifeless body of their prey; whereas the old lady, none the worse for her prowess, walked quietly back towards the Castle, as much as to say-" That's the way to do the trick, young 'uns! go, get your suppers, and recollect the lesson." This self-same bitch has figured in the Coursing Calendar, as the winner of many a stake; and the pups she produced on this occasion, only one week after this window-flight, all proved very superior dogs; indeed, they may fairly be said to have been in training in their mother's womb.

The amount of game killed on this day's excursion we do not name here with any intention whatever of calling attention to its amount; the rough account of our walk must speak for itself, and will quite suf-

ficiently explain that with shooting we combined the pleasure—indeed, the endless delight, to be found in Nature's picture-gallery, so variedly and so beautifully set before us: besides which, had we not a variety of chases—the last not the least exciting—to say nothing of the storming of blackcocks, by which we commenced the various amusements of the

day.

Three brace of these beautiful and glossy black-cocks, nine hares, three-and-a-half brace of grouse, three golden plovers, two brace-and-a-half of ptarmigan, making a total of twenty-nine head of game, was therefore all we could muster; quite sufficient, believe me, to afford an admirable day's amusement, even though we numbered four guns in the field. Let it be understood, however, that the grouse grounds of Meggernie produce quite sufficient game to secure the utmost amount of killed, compatible, in our humble opinion, with the spirit of a true sportsman, who shoots, not slaughters; indeed, at the moment we write this, we have before us two letters, dated, the one, Meggernie Castle, August 25th, 1846; the other, September 15th, which contains the following information:

"We have not done much in the shooting yet, as my party are hardly assembled; Mr. H. has, however, been out a few times, and at his age (73) done wonders. He killed on four different days $26\frac{1}{2}$, $27\frac{1}{2}$, 30, and 21 brace. There will be no performance like this in Scotland this year. We have plenty of game—millions of hares.

Truly may this be called good sport; and we will answer for it, not a chirper or a bad tried bird was found among the number. But this gentleman is a true sportsman by heart and deed, and has been so from seventeen to seventy-three. May he shoot on for years to come! The other letter states:

"The sport has been excellent. We have had great days with the hares. Above the wood, on Saturday, we killed 145 hares, 12 brace of grouse, 4 brace of ptarmigan, 1 roe, 1 golden plover. We have killed a thousand brace of grouse since the 12th of August, though there are but few young birds."

Turning to another document, a paragraph taken from a newspaper, we read that in the month of August the owner of some extensive moors in Perthshire killed and bagged on those moors the astonishing amount of one hundred and twenty brace of grouse

in one day.

We have no patience to proceed further in such details; for without we heard the fact asserted by him who did the foul deed, which courtesy would compel us to believe, we own we imagine it to be impossible for any single gun to commit so great a slaughter, unless large packs of grouse rose every ten yards immediately under the nose of the shooter, so that each volley could settle a dozen birds at least. On naming this fact to a friend, who, like ourselves, would rather at this moment be walking over the grouse hills, or riding at the rear of the stag-hounds over Dartmoor, than be the last in London, he at first endeavoured to excuse the murder by saying that this feat, as he had been told, was undertaken for the purpose of proving the abundance of game to be found on this property, the proprietor being anxious to sell it. If such be really the case, we can only say that, had we been desirous of becoming a purchaser, we should prefer to buy it with game on the grouse hills rather than without, which an act such as we have related must tend to annihilate for ever. According to the old maxim, however, every man has a right to do what he will with his own; and, having said thus much, we take our leave of the destroyer of one hundred and twenty brace of grouse, with the hope that he had the courtesy to send some of them to his friends in the south.

Daylight had now closed, and the bright moon shone in majesty over mountain, lake, and glen; millions of stars glittered in the mighty heavens; the early frost of autumn already whitened the grassy park, and the keen atmosphere without told with double force on the comforts prepared for us within, as, with one more look on the sparkling waters of the Lyon, and the shadows of the dark woods on its margin reflected by the moonbeams, and the towering hills beyond, we closed the shutters, and turned to the blazing wood and peat fire, and then joined our friends at the well-supplied board. Stewed hare at top; roast grouse at the bottom; then the hotchpotch and the haggis—the latter a dish, the eating of which ought to have been forbidden by an article in the Union. Yet was this repast one most grateful to the palates of tired and hungry sportsmen, and as the toddy glass went round for those who preferred it, and the mulled wine for those who did not, and the skirmishes on the hill tops were fought over again and again, who so merry as we? Years have now passed, many, many more may pass, yet long shall we remember this brief visit to the Glen of Lyon, as one bright spot in the journey of a life on which the clouds have not seldom lowered with unusual darkness. On the morrow we were to quit a scene, perhaps for ever, which had been to us one of unusual happiness. Well, be it so! yet long may the inhabitants of the wild glen live in peace and plenty! We sought them for our gratification, we left with much regret. It was our intention to start early, and walk direct through the glen, passing Loch Lyon and Ach, and making our first halt at Inverouran, a small lone house, twenty-five miles

from the Castle westward. But as we hope for your company in our walk, so we shall defer our description of it till a night's rest has refreshed our mental as well as physical powers; so

"Good night! good night;
May visions bright,
Sweet slumber o'er you hover,
Nor Fancy bring
Upon her wing
One thought to cloud to-morrow."

When most fatigued, however, sleep will not always readily obey the tired and fevered traveller, or the over-fatigued sportsman; particularly when his brain is overwhelmed with thoughts which rush through the imagination, now bright and beautiful, then dark and gloomy; like the stars of heaven, now shining forth in brightness, then lost to view by the passing cloud. This waking of the brain, though the body reclines in rest, may also be much increased by any little excitement previous to the hour of rest, and we must admit that we had a fair share of the grateful juice, which, doubtless, could the fruit which produced it have reasoned, as it ripened for the winepress on the sunny hills of Portugal and France, would never have submitted to be bottled up for the gratification of grouse-shooters in the Western Highlands. Nevertheless it was there, and we drank it; possibly a glass, just one glass, too much of it, and the consequence was, that instead of joining in the chorus of snores which sounded from time to time from neighbouring rooms, we lay thinking and ruminating, and building castles, and bringing down grouse, and, among other things, we painted the following picture-perhaps not with the skill of an artist, but nevertheless truthfully-as far as our recollection will permit.

I 3

CHAPTER VII.

THE hour was about six, the weather beautiful, the season late in July. We were strolling quietly homewards across Grosvenor Square, admiring with much satisfaction the unusual greenness of its centre garden, the clear blue sky above us, and the many gay and well-dressed children who were enjoying their gambols within the iron rails; ruminating also, and with justice, on the many joys and comforts granted us to mitigate the bitter cares, amid life's dark and fleeting dream of wretchedness, as we watched the numerous splendid horses, handsome carriages, and fair and well-adorned occupants, as they rolled rapidly by, when our attention was more particularly called to an unusually well-appointed equipage, which had stopped at one of the houses in the square. The horses were noble animals, the servants remarkably well but plainly dressed; indeed, the carriage, the harness, and everything, was peculiarly striking, from its total absence of all unnecessary ornament, and yet complete elegance and distinction in general appearance; yet if the carriage, servants, and beautiful horses had caused us to turn our attention to them, how far more were we attracted by the appearance of the fair and elegant woman who so gracefully reclined within it, face to face with two as beauteous children as mother's eye ever looked upon with fondness, or we ever had the pleasure of beholding. In fact, the whole picture, drawn as it is from nature, the high-bred mother, the lovely children, the horses, the whole combined, was a most perfect specimen of the wife, the mother, and the parent of England's most noble race. As yet no pride nor care sat on her fair, young brow, but the bright and beaming smile which lightened up her sweet face as she gazed on the loved ones near her, and the clear blue eye and winning grace of that gentle countenance, once seen could never be forgotten; indeed, the sweet and childish expression of the girl who faced us as we passed slowly on, can

never be obliterated from our memory.

This is a true but simple sketch of an English mother in the higher ranks of society; and if we may judge from the many beautiful children which are now daily to be seen driving about during the London season, we would fain hope that fashion no longer forbids to those amenable to its laws the pleasure of proving to the world they love the companionship of their offspring. There may be, as doubtless there are, many pictures similar to that we have endeavoured to describe, daily to be seen during the season; and doubtless the same fond mothers, met in the parks by day, at night may be found partaking of scenes of gaiety and revelry, when these loved objects of their tender care are hushed in their infantine slumbers. Yet, be assured, there is many and many a bright face, many a noble heart, many a young and affectionate wife, who participates in the frivolities of fashion, from the nature of her position, far more than from the nature of her inclinations, and who can most fully appreciate the beauties and the delights of the country beyond the precincts of Kensington Gardens and the parks.

Ay! hundreds are there, who look forward with delight to the period which emancipates them from the supposed pleasures of a London season, to the real ones to be found on the flowery-heathered mountains of Scotland, the wooded parks of England, and the green hills of Ireland.—But mark the sequel of this rough sketch: rough, we say, for all was rough in memory, compared to the outline of those cherub faces we had looked on but for a moment for the first time, and, as we then believed, the last. And yet it was so willed that we should meet againbut where? in Grosvenor Square?-No, surely not? Another London season had passed, and was forgotten; another bright summer had waned, and winter's rigours were over. The rich harvest of a second had been well nigh culled, when either duty or pleasure, but most probably the latter, found us in the extreme north-west of Scotland.

The hour was about the same, the season somewhat later, but the sun shone as brightly, and the scene was far, far more beautiful than Grosvenor Square, as, in company with a friend who like ourselves, loves to combine his sporting visits to different parts of the kingdom, with a glimpse of Nature's beauties wherever to be found, we were quietly walking our horses along the margin of a beautiful lake, the sides of which were overhung with luxuriant birch trees and mountain ash. All was so still, so bright, so beautiful, that as we looked on the rugged mountains, the green woods, and the clear waters near which we lingered, the busy world and the thronged city and the multitude might well be forgotten. The daily strife of man with man, the bitter sorrows of family contention, the agony of poverty, the sovereignty of wealth, the daily toil for bread, the follies of worldly pleasures, the darkness





of crime, and the wearying, feverish hours of the sickbed, were lost to thought in the contemplation of Nature's loveliness, by which on all sides we were surrounded. Thus we rode on, in much enjoyment of the scene, when, as we turned a sharp corner of the road, a totally different prospect presented itself: the path, which had hitherto been secluded by trees which covered the mountain slopes, now opened on a wide and extensive range of heathered hills, rising one above another in the far distance. We drew the rein, in admiration of the splendid prospect, when, about one hundred yards from the spot where we halted, we beheld a party of equestrians riding slowly down the mountain side towards the road. On their nearer approach, we discovered that the leader of the party was a lady; gracefully she sat, and carefully she guided a handsome and powerful Highland Galloway; by her side, on a rough Shet-land pony, a very picture of its race, rode a beautiful boy, some eight or ten years of age. The rear of the party was brought up by a steady and well-appointed groom, who held by a rein attached to its bit another but smaller Shelty, on which, gaily laughing, sat a lovely girl, probably a year younger than the boy, who doubtless was her brother. In such a spot, so secluded, and yet so interesting, the appearance of this riding party - so unusual a sight - was naturally a cause of much surprise. How much greater, however, was our astonishment when, on their reaching the road, we beheld the same beautiful woman, and the same lovely children, whose presence two years previous had delighted us in Grosvenor Square! The fair lady had no London appointments; no park habit; no thorough-bred steed; no flowing feather or cashmere shawl;-a plain straw bonnet covered her small and wellformed head; a skirt of tartan served as a ridingdress; but the same kindly smile, the same bright look graced her fair face, which, pale and beautiful in Grosvenor Square, was now tinged with the hue of health, gained doubtless from the fresh air of the mountains, among which, with her children, she was now enjoying herself. And the boy, with his Glengarry bonnet proudly placed on a head from which his long golden hair floated in the breeze-how well he sat his pony! How joyous was his look, as by his mother's side he rode—true specimen of the noble house of which in future years he may become the head! And the sweet girl-how she laughed and rode along, appealing to the faithful servant, as much as to say, "Let me ride free: I fear not!" Then, turning towards a noble deer-hound, well nigh as large as her pony, who trotted by her side as if proud of his darling charge, she caressed him with her sweet young voice, as he, with large and brilliant eyes, looked up and answered her caresses. We could have pressed her to our heart. But this was not all the picture. On the summit of a small hill, from which they had descended, were scattered here and there a party of sportsmen. Their dogs were in the act of seeking game; and the constant sharp echoes of the guns' report, as it rattled through the mountains, told of an addition to the game-book, and added to the childish delight of those who felt they were partakers in the pleasures and the sportsthe mother, of her husband; the children, of their father. Landseer! why were you not there, to put on canvass, in all the beauty of your colouring, that which our pen has but vainly endeavoured to convey?-But the scene shifted, and we turned to sleep, with the hope that a bright sunshine would welcome our rising.

"What various scenes, and, oh! what scenes of woe Are witnessed by that red and struggling beam! Through crowded hospital behold it stream:
The ruined maiden trembles at its gleam;
The debtor wakes to thought of gyve and jail;
The love-lorn wretch starts from tormenting dream;
The wakeful mother, by the glimmering pale,

Turns her sick infant's couch, and soothes her feeble wail."

But hark! what knock is that which breaks upon our slumbers? bang, bang against the door! "Come in, come in;" and we started up in bed, endeavouring to re-collect our thoughts. Oh, we understand; it is the last morning: we must bid adieu to Meggernie, its heathered hills and grassy vales, mountains, and bright trout streams.

"Well, F-, what's the hour, and how looks the

weather?"

"Time to rise, sir; your walk up the glen will be a long and weary one. The rain has fallen heavily since midnight, and the morning is rough and wet, with slight hopes of a clearing. The mountain rivulets will be swollen across the road before midday; it will therefore be well that you start early."

True, the appearance from our window was anything but a pleasing one, and we may fairly add—

"And mirk and mirkier grows the hill, And fiercer sweeps the blast; The heavens declare His wondrous power Who made the mountain fast."

Nevertheless, we had determined to go, and go we must. We had seen a little campaigning on the north of the Pyrenees, and were not to be deterred by the dangers which were threatened from boisterous weather to the west of Ben Lawers. Our baggage being in light marching order, was soon prepared, and strapped across the back of a strong, active, Highland pony. The keeper, and many of the

gillies who had shared in our sports and pleasures, came to bid us adieu; and, with a hearty wish for their health and happiness, we took one last long look at the Castle and all familiar scenes around it. The word was given to march, and away we went. The trusty F—— who, during our visit, had been keeper, valet, waiter, bed-maker, and cook's assistant, for all we knew—as he appeared active and willing enough for anything, as the following trifling anecdote will prove—had determined to accompany us some miles up the glen, in order to point out the right track; for of a road, after we had proceeded some little distance, there was very trifling appearance.

"Well, F—," said we, as side by side we walked along, grumbling, as human nature will grumble, even when one's best hopes have been realized, "it is unlucky we could not remain a few days longer in the glen; nevertheless we have had much enjoyment, and, thanks to you, we have been well fed and most comfortably lodged; indeed, after your day's work on the hills, and your night's work in the Castle, you

must have had enough of us."

Scotch we never learnt, though we managed to pick up a few words of Gaelic; the majority of our readers are, doubtless, equally ignorant of the neighbouring language. We must try, therefore, though it will lose much in the translation, to give his reply

in plain English.

"No, indeed, sir; I should be glad if you could have remained: you have not walked over half the sporting ground, and you appear to enjoy everything—scenery as well as sporting. I am not readily fatigued; indeed, I have scarcely been in bed this night."

"Why so, what's been the matter? No one ill,

we trust?"

"Oh, nothing sir; nothing unusual or extraordinary; only my missis was taken unexpectedly in labour. Doctors are not so plentiful in these Highland glens as in the low country; so I mounted the pony and rode fourteen miles to Fortingale, and brought bach the leech just in time: eight-and-twenty miles at midnight through the valley is no pleasant excursion. All's well, however, thank God; and I am the happy parent of No. 5."

The night previous to this pleasing event, we had seen Mrs. F. concocting a hare stew; so these matters are easily arranged beyond the Border; and we conscientiously recommend those having cara sposas in a state which ladies desire to be "who love their lords," to take them on a Highland tour just in proper time. The process—we mean that of introducing a young Highlander to the light of day—is rapid,

cheap, and cleverly effected.

But to proceed; we had determined not to deviate from the beaten track, for a heathered couch among the mountains of Glen Lyon is by no means an agreeable resting-place during the night at the latter end of October. Should any grouse, blackcock, or hares, be sufficiently obliging to present themselves, no objection whatever existed to slaying them; but to follow game over the heathered mountain-sides was forbidden. We had two couple of dogs-that is, two rough deer-hounds and two greyhounds; these ran free, with due authority to chase, catch, and kill any hares, roe-deer, or other intruders which might perchance cross our path; but no roving was permitted, all was left to chance. The mountain rivulets rushed foaming across the road; the hills looked dark and dreary; even the smoke of our cigars was beaten down by the atmosphere; and we had scarcely walked a mile, ere we were sufficiently

informed that a Scotch mist in London, which induces a man to spend a shilling for a cab to save his new hat, among these craggy mountains of Glen Lyon proves that your shooting-jacket, flannel waist-coat, and shirt are by no means waterproof—nevertheless, le jeu vaut bien la chandelle, be it even a wax one burnt on the altar of patience and temper; and a wet jacket on such an occasion is unquestionably a trifle lighter than the air over head. "But what's that on the brow of yonder hillock? a crow, or a raven?"

"I'll bet you a shilling it is a blackcock." (Englishmen always bet, however trifling the subject.)

"Done!"

"Then here goes!"

Whatever the bird, it was perched on a rock at more than sixty yards' distance. No gun ever misses in the Highlands, whatever it may do in a turnip-field. Bang! the report echoed through the mountains: up towered the black bird straight in mid air, and down it fell plump among the heather. F- smiled, and we laughed outright; and our companion ran and picked up a fine blackcock, dead: we pocketed the shilling and the bird; the bad weather, for the moment, was forgotten, and on we walked, arriving shortly after at the small lake of Girnie, which is well stocked with trout, though of no great size; nevertheless the catching of these affords much sport both to ladies and gentlemen, and the eating of them-a consequence which naturally follows—is by no means a disagreeable pastime.

This small but interesting lake is surrounded on all sides by lofty heather-covered mountains, to which, on a calm summer or autumnal evening, it may literally be said to be the mirror, as their shadowy outlines are therein most distinctly reflected.





On such an evening we have found ourselves, rod in hand, almost imperceptibly pulled over its unrippled waters by the sinewy arms of a Highlander, who quietly rowed the boat; while we, with sundry small flies attached to our line, now hauled some three or four fish at a time into our boat, who were sufficiently unwise or greedy to snap at the many-coloured bait, which streamed along the surface of the glassy lake as we glided on, reclining in our gondola; now lost in admiration of the wild but quiet scene by which we were encircled; now barbarously removing the little trout from their native element for our amusement, but, doubtless, to their dismay; now ruminating on the many cares of life, and thinking, at the same time, our position, for the time being, was vastly agreeable. So you may take note, gentlemen sportsmen, that even should you be afflicted with the gout, and cannot always walk over the heathered hills in search of the game, you may even pass an hour or two reposing in a boat, and do a little business in the fishing line in memory of Izaak Walton.

We had scarcely proceeded half a mile further up the glen, when an unusually rocky, and almost perpendicular side of a steep mountain was pointed out to our notice. High in this craggy mount there was a deep fissure, or hollow, called the "Eagle's nest," from which projected a curiously-shaped projecting ledge, whereon the mind could readily imagine one of these noble birds " sitting in the pride of place,"

as surety of his mate and young within.
"It was from that place," said F——, "that the eagles were taken which were sent you last year."

"Is it possible," we replied, "that any human being could venture to obtain a footing there, and return with life?"

"Oh, yes," he said, "it is a constant practice for

the boys of this glen to lower themselves with ropes, and thus they secure the eggs, as also frequently the young birds; and I have never known an accident occur."

But with reference to these eagles, two young birds were kindly sent to us when staying in the neighbourhood of Perth. These birds were duly deposited in a hamper, with ample provision for their journey; a letter having been previously forwarded to announce their arrival. At length the expected hamper made its appearance; but, on opening it, we only discovered one-a fine, living bird of the genus Falco chrysætos, or Golden Eagle, who had trampled on the breathless body of his companion: a trifling scrimmage must therefore, doubtless, have taken place during their transit; and, as is ever the case, the weak succumbed to the strong. Our living friend, however, was so splendid a specimen of his race, that we forthwith took the precaution to secure his comforts as well as his presence in our garden, and, by general consent, christened him "Meggernie." His growth, however, was so rapid, his strength so wonderful, and his appetite really so untiring, that neither his education nor consumption were unimportant matters. Nevertheless, for his bodily comfort, we had a sort of wooden house built; and, for his better security, a very light chain was attached to his leg; which the sequel will shew was by no means an unnecessary precaution. His food—of which the daily consumption was enormous—consisted of raw meat, poultry, when he could get it, rabbits, and every species of bird, dead or alive, from a raven to a pigeon, which might be tendered to appease his appetite. Offer him a living bird, he clutched it with his talons, and forthwith it ceased to live; present him with a dead one, and his beak

instantly tore it asunder. Now, we chanced at that time to have a Highland terrier named Quiz, a very gem of his race—the very writing of whose name is really a matter of pain to us, for, as a puppy, he had been kindly presented to us by a friend; and though we have seen hundreds of these little cheerful animals, he was, without exception, the most attached and faithful companion man could desire to possess, and we have never known a dog whose death caused us such real regret as he, who, during his life, gave us such a constant fund of entertainment, whether in the house or not.

Now the jealousy of this little animal, in regard to the intruding eagle, was something marvellous; indeed, so hateful was the presence of the bird, we firmly believe he would have sacrificed his own life, could he have made the eagle succumb in the same struggle for existence. But his enemy was too wary, and indeed far too powerful, for us to permit their coming to close quarters; for doubtless he would have seized the little terrier at once with his talons, and having pecked out his eyes, destroyed him in no When bones or meat were thrown to the eagle, the little fellow, with ears erect, would watch the opportunity of his back being turned, and then make a dart at the provision: this was an every-day practice, and caused us endless fun and merriment. In proof, however, of the powers of this bird, we will merely add, that on one occasion he broke his chain short off at the end attached to his domicile, and with this, notwithstanding the whole length of its weight, flew up to the top of a high fir-tree, from which, with great precaution and difficulty, we succeeded in again securing him. At length, however, his quarrels with Quiz, his everlasting and unsatisfying appetite, with its consequent outlay for provisions,

and his eternal screaming near the house, together with the knowledge that he would not be unacceptable to a kind friend in England, induced us to part with him. And he was once more deposited in a large hamper, and by steam conveyed from Glasgow to Liverpool. And if he hath not departed this life since the winter of 1844, he still lives as one of the not least noble specimens in the splendid collection of the Earl of Derby, at Knowsley.

But here we bade adieu to our trusty guide. Had he been a Frenchman, doubtless we should have embraced him, and said, au plaisir or au revoir, or some similar humbug; as it was, we parted from him with the feeling that he was an honest man, and a good sportsman: would that we could quit all men with a similar feeling of good-will, amid the varied scenes of this passing dream of life!—him we have never

since beheld.

"You must continue straight up the glen," said he, "passing by Loch Damh* at the extremity, about ten miles forward; the mountain-bases will there almost close in the valley; you will then come to the high road which runs from Tyndrum to King's House; and a short walk further to your right you will find the inn at Inverouran, a lone house which stands on the banks of Loch Tallie, or Tulla, at the southern extremity of the Black Mountain; there you will find accommodation for the night; and for the morrow, your way is clear."

With these instructions he bade us farewell.

It will be uninteresting to our readers to fatigue them with any lengthened details of this day's excursion, as we did ourselves with the walk, notwith-

^{*} Damh is Gaelic for stag, and certainly has a great affinity to the French word daim, which signifies fallow-deer.

standing its great interest to sportsmen, though literally through a rough, wild valley, formed of the extended bases of high, rocky, and heather-covered mountains, by which it was hemmed in, as it were, from the wide world. Beyond these limits, and through the centre of which becoming at last a mere mountain rivulet, runs the river Lyon. It would also be uninteresting to others, though certainly not so to ourselves, to describe how here we crossed a rushing mountain-torrent knee deep, and there floundered in a swamp, declaring each moment that the Scotch miles were English leagues-that we must have lost our way, for there was no end to the glen; and as for high-road, it could only have existed in the imagination of F., and not in reality. Indeed, had we not managed to keep up animal excitement during the morning excursion by tumbling over a few grouse and a snipe in addition to the blackcock, and fancied we saw a deer on the mountain-top, which was probably only a heifer, we really think we should have been food for the eagles ere day-break, and our bones, bleached by time and exposure, would have adorned the top of some shepherd cairn, as a warning to sporting gentlemen from the south never to attempt the passage of a Highland glen without a guide. We allude, of course, to a regular, positive, ready-made, absolute glen; not one of your glens through which runs a macadamized road, with halting points of admiration made for tourists, like vistas cut through the labyrinths of a Dutch garden. As it was, wet, weary, foot-sore, and half famished, we at length beheld with joy the long-looked-for road, and with renewed courage, after a brisk walk, arrived at Inverouran.

Imagination loves to revel in comforts, and anticipation had led us to hope that the hovel we beheld, nick-named an "inn," might prove a harbour of rest and refreshment. Of rest, however, we had little; and as for the refreshment, more of that anon. The closing evening was wet, dark, and dreary, as our little cavalcade halted before the door of this house of entertainment—which in good truth it was, in every sense of the word, but that we desired at the moment: entertained mentally, unquestionably we were—bodily, however, we had no entertainment whatever; nevertheless we managed to pass the time

merrily.

For one moment, however, do us the favour to fancy a lusty citizen tourist-fresh and blooming from turtle and sirloins-hungry, wet, fatigued, and grumpy, driving up to the "Hôtel de l'Inverouran," and on being ushered into a sitting-room eight feet by ten, half filled with smoke from a smothered peat fire, and redolent with the smell of whisky and bad tobacco, and having therein seen his goods and chattels deposited, in despair requests a shoeless Highland lassie, who scarcely understood a word of English, to show him his sleeping apartment, that he might refresh himself previous to the evening's repast; -imagine, we say, this damsel pointing to two large cupboards, built in the wall, almost exactly similar to those on board a Scotch smack in days lang syne, and saying, with perfect coolness, "you may e'en take your choice!" We say, imagine such a scene occurring to such an individual, because the absurdity would be great. To us it did actually occur; and we laughed aloud, and took our choice, and tried to sleep therein, and should have slept soundly, had it not been for the numerous visitors of the flea family who supped on us, as almost supperless we retired to our berth. Having, however, secured our sitting-room, we opened the

shutters to let out the smoke-for glass there was none - and made ourselves as comfortable as Englishmen generally do on all occasions. solicited refreshment: tea, fried ham, and eggs, bannocks or oat cakes, and what we surmised to be smoked mutton ham, were soon placed on the board; and board it literally was, for no white cloth concealed the dirt of an unwashed deal table. by hunger, we attacked the dainties thus rudely set before us; and had they been eatable, a sportsman's appetite would not easily have been checked, and after a rough day's walk he might readily have dispensed with the damask. The tea, however, was out of the question-no senna was ever half so nauseous; and as for the fried ham, we insult the excellence of such a dish by giving its name to the wedges of smoked bacon which floated in their own grease. The eggs were tolerably fresh, and, being protected by their shells from the dirty hands of the lassie who placed them on the deal, were clean within, if not without. But the mutton required consideration. "What is it?" we exclaimed, as, with some difficulty, we made an incision into the hard and flat-looking joint; but whether it was a leg or shoulder, it was utterly impossible to decide. "What is it!" exclaimed the damsel, who barefooted stood at hand, as if in admiration of the bounty with which she had supplied us, "why, bracey, to be sure!"

"Bracey, my bonny lassie !- and what may bracey

be ?"

But we must again request permission to give her

explanation in plain English.

"Why, bracey, sir, is just a sheep which dies of the rot—or, we should rather say, which would have died without the aid of the butcher's knife, if master had not supplied his own just in the nick of time;" thus saving a coroner's inquest of eagles and ravens, who doubtless would soon have appeared to set on the body of the defunct. Having done this little act of politeness by relieving the unhappy animal from probably an hour's internal torture, he next proceeds to skin and cut up the carcass; this process being over, two or three gillies set to work in the nearest brook to pound the flesh with stones till all the blood is extracted; the meat and joints are then salted, and hung up the chimney to dry and smoke, till some hungry traveller or excursionary sportsman, like ourselves, may chance to halt at the posada

and require a mutton ham.

But we really speak nothing but fact when we assert the above occurrence, such as we have related it, to be a constant practice in the Highlands; and so far from any disgust arising, as it did to us, at the bare idea of feasting on meat so luxuriously prepared by Highlanders, it is esteemed as one of the greatest delicacies with which their larder can be supplied for winter consumption. They do not eat it, however, as served to us; but a large slice is cut from time to time from the joint, and then, with onions, cabbages, and such herbs as may be at hand, it is thrown into the "pot au feu" till a greasy broth is prepared, which, to a resident on the heathered mountains, is preferred to all the turtle which Birch would supply, or Soyer set before the most delicate palate. To them, without one feeling of jealousy or regret, we leave the braccy so liberally offered to us, and for which, of course, we had as liberally to pay. One smoking tumbler of toddy, in recollection of the last night's savory supper, and with some difficulty, and not without some danger of a broken head, we crawled into the berth we had

selected. Take notice, however, sporting travellers in the land of the mountain and the flood, that on this occasion we wore the breeches; and why? the game is plentiful on the borders of the Black Mount: and notwithstanding our precaution, ere the light of morning had peeped through the ill-secured shutters, we were up and ready to fly "over the hills and far away," whether wet, fine, or gloomy, so fiercely had we been feasted on during the night.

"And if my voice break forth, 'tis not that now I shrink from what I suffered."

Let us forgive, however, if we cannot well forget the miseries of that night. For, lo! the glorious sun once more beams in all its splendour on mountain, wood, and vale; the rain of yesterday is gone, and all nature, as if laughing with joy, shines forth bright and beautiful. Where is the heart that is not touched with gladness by the fresh and exhilarating air of a clear and brilliant autumnal morning in the Highlands?—where the sportsman, who does not carry his gun with double vigour, when the sky above is clear, the air light, and all nature smiling around him?

"The sluggards deem it but a foolish chase, And marvel men should quit their easy chair, The toilsome way, and long, long league to trace. Oh! there is sweetness in the mountain air, And life, that bloated Ease can never hope to share."

CHAPTER VIII.

Our object in selecting the route we did, in order to visit Loch Ness and Invermoriston, was twofold: the one, that we might pass the Black Mount, and consequently through the celebrated Deer Forest, the property of the Marquis of Breadalbane,—and, we may add, the jewel of greatest value in the estimation of a sportsman, his very extensive shooting grounds; the other, that we might look on scenes never to be forgotten while treachery is loathed, or murder of the foulest nature engraven on the annals of Scottish history, with tears of remorse.

Alas! no time can ever blot from the pages of memory the fact, that swords which were drawn under the semblance of friendship and protection, were dishonoured and bedewed with the blood of innocent victims while generously tending the rites of hospitality, and disgraced for ever by the massacre of Glencoe. To history, however, we must refer our readers for details of this sad deed, as well as for others which mark the high road from Inverouran to King's House, and thence to Fort William-the mountain tracks being more in keeping with the pursuits and pleasures on which we were bound. As, however, the lord of the soil, who has a commodious shooting-lodge hard by Loch Tulla, in which he doubtless spends many agreeable weeks, when following the splendid sport of deer-stalking-in which we



The basile of Invermouston, on the banks of Lock. Ve



should not have the slightest objection to accompany him, should he ever require an agreeable companion —is not over pleased that the foot of an idler or a poacher, if he can help it, should cross these wild hills and disturb the deer, we determined, at least, as far as King's House, to act in obedience to his wishes, and consequently decided that both men and dogs should be conveyed on wheels. On asking for a vehicle, however, to put this our determination into practice, the bare-footed lassie, who might, without fear of fibbing, be termed the maid-of-allwork, literally laughed outright, in sheer admiration of our ignorance. Nevertheless, she made us sensible to the fact that we might be carted in a peat-cart to King's House, if so we desired; but as for a carriage, it would not do to keep such luxuries on the banks and braes of Tulla: so we agreed with her, and decided on the cart at once. And carted we literally were -with empty stomachs, forsooth, but all excitement for the hoped-for events of the coming day. The springless vehicle stood at the door, a rough Highland cob being harnessed in the shafts, the interior well filled with straw and heather; and in this we seated ourselves, dogs, and light baggage, being determined to disturb the forest as little as possible at so early an hour.

The road was in admirable order, and our anxiety to behold some red deer was paramount to all other considerations. With telescope in hand, therefore, we reclined in our cushionless "one horse shay;" and on we moved, with the full conviction that when the mind is bent upon a fascinating pursuit, trifles neither deter nor disgust—at least those who desire to pleased, and are not ever on the look-out for

causes of annoyance.

As we journeyed along thus at early morning, our

ears were constantly saluted by the crowing of grouse, which, perched upon the numerous little hillocks, looked as comfortable and fearless as had they been a hundred miles from two double-barrelled Mantons and a rifle; which, merely in fear of our meeting brigands in this wild locality, we kept loaded in the vehicle, notwithstanding all the written precautions of ourselves and others never to sit in the same carriage with a charged fowling-piece.

Half reclining, half sitting on the straw and heather, during this our uneasy transit, we ranged with our glass far and wide each dark vale and craggy mountain-top, in the anxious hope of beholding a herd of red deer; in which, nevertheless, we scarcely expected to be gratified, inasmuch as the sun was already far advanced o'er the eastern horizon. Indeed, we had already yielded to the calming influence of a cigar, and were deep in the mental delusions respecting the pleasures the Marquis must so frequently enjoy, and which to us were denied, when the caravan came to a sudden halt, which well nigh threw us on our beam-ends. Having luffed, however, a little to the westward, to recover our easy position, the kilted chariot-driver approached, and, as if nothing had really occurred worth mentioning, with a half-sleepy yawn, as he removed the short pipe from his mouth, he quietly exclaimed, "I'm just thinking I see a stag or twa on you brae." Out flew the cigar from lips which hitherto had held it as a treasure—up went the telescope—and, breathless with emotion, we skimmed the horizon, and at length pitched on the spot, where not a stag or twa, but a whole herd of red-deer, hart and hind, were seen reposing in the warm sun, while others were still picking up the fresh and dewy grass. As we gazed, intensely delighted at this, one of the most

beautiful pictures a sportsman can behold, the thoughts rushed rapidly through our mind, of what must be his sensations at such a moment, who not only looks on the noble animals, but has the right to shoot them also. This herd of deer, on which our eyes then dwelt with interest and admiration, could not have numbered less than a hundred haunches, for thus they were jocularly counted by one of our companions; and although a mile at least from the spot where we had halted, the sun, which shone in brilliancy on their feeding ground, enabled us so distinctly to behold them, that with the aid of a glass they

might easily have been counted.

We remained for a considerable time watching the movements of these kings of the forest, when lo !for what reason, we know not, whether they had caught sight of our party (by no means improbable or impossible, for their sense of smell and hearing is most acute, as all sportsmen are well aware), or whether they had been disturbed by some more immediate object invisible to us, we cannot pretend to say-nevertheless, in one moment the reposers started up, and the whole formed in a strong body like a troop of horse. A large stag singled himself from the herd, and having gazed around on all sides, and having doubtless informed his seraglio that danger was at hand, the whole body galloped steadily up the mountain side: their chivalrous leader, in this case forming the rear guard, halted from time to time, till, having reached the summit of the hill on which they had been feeding, the word to form in single line was evidently given; for in this manner they rattled along the ridge, and thence down the steep end of it, bounding like racers up the face of a steeper mountain, right over the top of which they fled.

The large and gallant stag, who still kept his place in the rear, halted one instant on its rocky summit, and was then lost to our sight for ever. Never before or since have we so heartily desired, as we did on that morning, that poaching were pastime instead of imprisonment; indeed, a month's incar-ceration, "minus" the treadmill, might almost be endured for one crack, hit or miss, at such noble animals, or for one slip of a brace of dogs, such as we then possessed, on the ground they had selected for their morning meal—of which we already began to feel the want; for excitement added to an early morning's ride, gives a keen edge to the appetite. Yet, for one day's permission to follow on their track, we would willingly have run the chance of a venison steak ere nightfall, or starvation. But we were recalled from this truly exhilarating scene by another wise hint from the lips of our driver-"I'm just thinking, if we do not gang on our way, ye'll nae be reaching Ballahulish this night."

So creak went the wheels again, and on we drove amid this wild and mountainous scene; for here Rannoch appears nothing but a dreary, bleak, and boggy moor, the loose soil of which is peat, broken by pools and small lakes. At length we reached King's House—truly no regal abode of entertainment, though dignified by the name—which stands like a dot in the midst of a barren wilderness; surrounded, save on the east, by the most craggy, bare, and lofty mountains which the mind can well picture

in her Majesty's dominions.

In these days of reformation, however, when princes shoot grouse and stalk deer with their subjects, and, we trust, give them an equal chance of the sport with themselves, royalty may chance to light a pipe there. As regards ourselves, we found

the only room in the house in which we could stand upright half-filled with drovers, the other half with smoke. Being, therefore, perfectly satisfied with the royal hostelry within, we took a turn without, in order to survey the sporting ground by which it was surrounded. To the west of the house may be seen a bare mountain of great height and of a conical shape, from the summit of which, half way to the base, the shelving rocks lay one on the other, forming a truly picturesque appearance, on which the sun, glittering like diamonds, formed a curious contrast to the dark and russet-coloured ravine beneath it. This is doubtless a pleasant retreat for ptarmigan and mountain fox. But we must

"Away, nor let me loiter in my song, For we had many a mountain path to tread."

before we arrived at Glencoe; and if so be that night should darken on our footsteps before we reached the ferry of Ballahulish, some greater distance still, we might perchance find the cognomen of the district prophetic; for we surmise the "coe" to signify, in Gaelic, lamentation. Previous, however, to being received into the arms of the craggy mountains we were approaching, or placing a foot on the "Devil's Staircase," for such is the name given to the very steep and very interesting descent into Glencoe---having a very unpleasant recollection of the miserable larder and untouchable cuisine of the previous night, and fearing that we might meet with a similar fate at Ballahulish, the very name of which was sufficient to cause internal misgivings, we took the liberty of borrowing a hare, a brace of grouse, and a grey hen, from the most noble the Marquis of Carabas; for such, without offence, he may be justly designated in the where and whereabouts we were

sentimentally sporting, by looking at red-deer we longed for and dared not shoot; and as we knew it was wrong to covet other men's goods, we borrowed, as aforesaid, a bird or two to stifle the pangs of conscience and prevent the pangs of hunger. The hare, poor thing! unluckily got up just before us, as we quietly walked along the heather by the road side. Of course we could not permit it to exhaust its energies for our diversion, so we shot it dead, and carried it in our pocket down the declivity. A brace of grouse rose also very rudely just under our nose in their hurry to get off, nearly knocking out the second cigar with which we were endeavouring to console ourselves, the deer having obliged us to relinquish the first. So, having seriously warned them of their effrontery with a cartridge right and left, we condemned them also to imprisonment for the remainder of the day. One of our companions appeared also to be insulted in a similar manner by another grouse, and, knowing the punishment we had inflicted, instantly followed our example; and being also very desirous to examine the plumage of a grey hen, none of which game had fallen to his gun at Meggernie, he helped himself to one as he walked along; and, having satisfied himself that it really was a very handsome bird, and would do well to stuff, we conveyed that also with our other light baggage, inasmuch as it was too late to walk back to Taymouth to leave them with the keeper. So we decided to view the "Massacre of Glencoe," as the tourists denominate the beautiful glen, and really talk of it as if they expected to arrive in time to witness the direful scene of bloodshed actually taking place, where history points out the romantic locale of its occurrence.

To them we leave the task of its description; for

us, the pleasure of dwelling a few moments on the sublime scenery by which on all sides we were surrounded.

Turn to the west, and behold the lofty mountains which almost close the entrance of Glencoe, for few such are to be found in other parts of Scotland. As you advance, each mountain top appears more craggy, each mountain side more wild, than that which precedes it. Walk on, and you appear lost in a labyrinth of ravines and rocks; dark, dreary, and towering mounts, at the feet of which the winding rivulet rushes foaming madly on. As we looked on this truly beautiful picture, one of nature's wildest specimens, we clenched more firmly the rifle in our hands, in momentary but imaginative hope that a chamois, bounding from rock to rock, would soon give us a chance of getting our hand into practice for the expected sport at Glen Moriston, forgetting we were in the land of cakes and ale, and not once more "upon the woody Apennine." Touching the " cakes and ale," however, in this part of the Highlands, we imagine, by common consent, such pleasing edibles are reserved for him whose staircase we were descending; at least, none were forthcoming for us.

Agreeable as the descent to Glencoe truly is in fine weather, during a storm it must be grand indeed. About six miles from the royal posada, we approached the torrent which forms the embouchure of the small water of Coe, whence it falls from the mountains in a fine cataract, and thence through a dark, deep, narrow passage, dashing over and among large and craggy rocks for at least a mile, runs through the narrow Glen of Coe and joins the lake, alike refreshing trout and eel. The mountains to the north of the Coe are high and beautiful, but rounder than those on the opposite side, their sum-

mits being clothed with good feeding for deer. As we advanced through this steep and narrow pass, our amusement was diversified by the sight of a sort of open barouche, drawn by a pair of cart horses, doubtless posters from Ballahulish, which came slowly up the Devil's Path. This meeting was rather a pleasing variety in our afternoon walk; not that we

needed subjects of interest.

The party to which the carriage appertained, consisted of a portly gentleman, his spare rib, and a rather pretty daughter. For her sake we were half inclined to resist the tormenting inclination which came over us, to ask her worthy sire what he thought of the beauties of the glen, and whether he was on a deer-stalking excursion, or simply on a trip of pleasure. His face, however, round as a harvest moon at the full, which discovered itself from time to time, as he removed the yellow pocket-handkerchief which was doing duty on his perspiring forehead, at once convinced us that he was an interesting specimen of the biped creation who could stand the fire of badinage; in fact, one of the owl species, the female of which is said to hatch her young in Whitechapel, whence they frequently migrate, during the months of summer and autumn, to the Highlands of Scotland, returning on the approach of winter to their own fire-It was quite evident that the individual who called himself a post-boy, but was, in fact, a herd-boy, had been pointing out to our traveller the beauty of the scenery, and half in Gaelic, and the other half in English and Scotch curiously mixed together, had been telling various tales of how and where it had all happened in the glen below. The good fat gentleman, however, was either totally ignorant or totally deaf to this newly-invented language, for the more the lad talked the more he mapped and looked

amazed. At length, however, he beheld our party. We had halted, and sat on a rock by the way-side to allow the carriage and pedestrians to pass, and having previously surveyed the strangers with our glasses, were speculating on some adventure. On a nearer approach, the lusty tourist evidently concluded from our costume, guns, and companions—the dogs -that we were sporting gentlemen of the neighbourhood, and in this opinion we had no objection that he should remain. And thus he accosted us accordingly:

"Good sport, gentlemen, I hope?" "Very fair, sir-very fair indeed."
"Killed any deer?"

"Not many, to-day-only two or three."

"But there are plenty among these Alpine mountains, are there not?"

"Yes, plenty: when you get further up into the

forest you will see them feeding in scores."

"The d-1!" he was about to say, but checked himself on a sign from the pretty daughter, who looked at him archly from under a pink silk bonnet: nice costume for the Highlands!

"And how far, gentlemen, may we be from the forest? Because, if we get among these brutes after nightfall, it may probably be unpleasant."

"Why, the forest commences at the top of the mountain, from whence it may be twelve miles or thereabouts to King's House: certainly no further."

"Not further! Are the trees of the forest

thick?"

Alas! what an expression had that lusty face! It really appeared to grow thinner at the idea of passing through a dense forest full of wild deer, instead of six miles over barren hills; but he felt he had no alternative, and resigned himself accordingly.

"Pray, what sort of accommodation shall we find at King's House?"

"Why, certainly much better than is generally found at such inns."

"This latter intelligence was evidently pleasing; and he forthwith broke into a running fire of pleasing information: "Such a fine prospect this, gentlemen! Bloody battle in the glen below, I'm told, when the French landed!" And, with courteous

salutes, we parted.

The travellers had scarcely proceeded twenty yards, however, ere our heart smote us for thus rudely joking; and we ran after the carriage, and insisted on the ladies accepting the brace of grouse we had shot, in positive fear that our sex would become hateful to them for the vile effrontery with which we had accosted them, should they chance to go supperless to bed in the smoky hovel where they

proposed resting till daybreak.

We had still, however, several miles of rough walking, previous to reaching the destination we had determined on as our halting-place for the night, in order to secure an easy day on the morrow, when we trusted ere sunset to reach the Castle of Invermoriston. True, nothing could surpass the interest and variety of beautiful scenery such as that amid which we were rapidly descending towards the glen. To diverge, however, from the road for any chance of game was out of the question; for on one side the mountains rose abrupt and steep, and on the other, massive rocks and huge stones formed the only barrier to the descent into a rapid torrent, which rushed, foaming and roaring, below us. The whistle of a rifle, and its rattling echoes o'er the mountains, which, in desperation, we discharged at a hungry raven, the solitary possessor of a large rock in the

centre of the ravine, was, therefore, all the powder we spent in this memorable descent of the Devil's Staircase; and him we scarcely frightened. Yet, notwithstanding that we had not loitered on our route, after passing courtesies with the T. G., as all travelling gentlemen are termed who visit a colonial garrison, the change from daylight to pitch dark, which, barring the moon's brightness, is as sudden in the North Highlands as the report from the flash of a gun, came over us ere we arrived at the ferry at Ballyhulish, where we had decided on crossing Loch Leven, in order to gain a resting place where we hoped to find better accommodation than that which had fallen to our lot at Inverouran.

There is a whiskey-shop (Anglice, a pot-house— Scottice, an inn) on either side of the above-named ferry, at which houses of public entertainment travellers and tourists are said to be provided with ample food and refreshing sleep, during the fine months of summer and autumn; in fact, till the equinoctial gales set in, and then they all set out for the south. Sportsmen are never unwisely particular: if they are so, far better remain at home, and shoot pheasants after luncheon. Food and lodging, such as it is, can therefore generally be found for them. As we have already said, however, night had closed over mountain, lake, and valley; and a pitch dark one was it ere we reached the ferry. The goblins of departed heroes might have risen from the Coe, and twitched us by the nose, without the slightest power of precaution on our part, for all we saw or could have avoided, had it not been so disposed that we should be overtaken by a shepherd and his faithful collie dog-by the bye, one of the most sagacious and attached of the canine racewho had followed us with the same intention as ourselves, to cross the waters of the Leven without delay.

The time lost, however, in refusing the various endeavours which were made to detain our bodies and our siller on the south side of the Loch (our fixed determination being to sleep on the north side); the boiling of a pint of water with which we desired to concoct a glass of toddy, to keep us inwardly, at least, free from the chilling effects of the cold night air and sea breezes which whistled up the glen; to rouse the ferrymen by threats and then by bribes, the latter far the more effectual; to induce them to leave their snug corners by the warm peat fire and soothing pipes, in the full enjoyment of which they were quietly seated, was at least two hours. They had not the most remote idea that any one not absolutely daft, with a will of their own and siller in their pouch, could leave a house of entertainment to cross a ferry during so dark a night, at all times unpleasant, and frequently dangerous; and this, as they positively declared, with a strong tide running and strong wind blowing, in the precise direction, of all the tides which flowed and all the winds which blew, the worst and wildest. At length, however, Mammon decided the question, and we were fairly embarked

"O'er the dark waters of the deep blue sea;"

the shepherd, his faithful collie, our beloved canine companions, Bran, Brenda, Nell, Rachael, and the rest of us.

A few small lights twinkled on the opposite shore; the wind moaned through the mountains; we heard the rushing of the tide beneath and around our frail bark; we smelt the smell of insufferably bad tobacco; but as for seeing one another, or aught else, such

was not to be. Indeed, we really began to think seriously we had been over-zealous in our persuasion, and over-liberal with our donations. shepherd took the matter so coolly, we determined to follow his example; and it happily proved that the very tide which was to carry us over to the island of Mull, and the very wind which was to prove so dangerous, as we had already surmised, proved in both cases the very best wind and the very best tide for the rapid crossing of the Ballyhulish ferry from south to north. With no little satisfaction, therefore, we soon discovered that the twinkling lights we had seen in the distance were nothing more nor less than the tallow candles used by the inhabitants of that celebrated locality. We lost no time even in abusing the boatmen, so rejoiced were we to find ourselves once more on terra firma, but proceeded at once to seek our quarters and rest, and what was equally desirable at the moment, something to eat; for we were well nigh famished. But it is a strange fact, though nevertheless a true one, that Highlanders either nourish themselves by stealth, or live on less than any other mortals under the sun. At these roadside inns, excepting in the tourist season, whisky, oatmeal, and dried herrings, and those none of the best, is all the provision generally at hand. As regards the Lowlanders, in the summer they live on the hope of gain; in winter, as above described; whereas the Highlanders substitute braccy for herrings.

We entered, as usual, into a smoky, dirty kitchen, too late to expect any reasonable comfort or consideration. A lazy, fat, bare-footed girl half-dozed on a three-legged stool over a cauldron of potatoes boiling for the pigs; and a lanky, red-haired, ill-looking fellow, probably her lover, lolled on a bench

near the fire, smoking his short black pipe, which he merely moved from his mouth on our entrance to give us a look of astonishment; and probably wishing us at Jericho for so untimely an intrusion upon his tête-à-tête, resumed his puffing, in which occupation the ferryman who had entered with us immediately joined him. Having received our promised reward, they were satisfied; and had any unfortunate traveller chanced to arrive with the same desire that we evinced to cross the ferry, the identical excuses would doubtless have been offered to his wish, though with somewhat more of truth.

We have to thank the Marquis of Carrabas, that we went not supperless to bed that night. The hare was prepared and roasted; the remaining grouse split and broiled; we robbed the pigs of a few potatoes—the disease had not then, luckily, made the best of vegetables uneatable—and notwithstanding the toughness of puss, we managed to pass a very pleasant hour or two; and we had scarcely laid our head on the pillow ere the discomforts of the Ballyhulish hotel, the Marquis and his deer forest, the fat gentleman, the Devil's Staircase, and the ferrymen

were forgotten.

We dreamt not of grouse or Highland mountains—yet of scenes not unlike, though more soft and genial. We saw the stag roused from his lair in the woods of North Devon, and we followed in pursuit over the hills and dales of Exmoor. Devon! scene of so many recollections of happiness unalloyed, of bitterness never-to-be-forgotten! Arcadia of pure streams and pastoral hills, rich vales, and softly genial climate! region of picturesque beauty, where Spring first unfolds her mantle green! Nature to thee has indeed been bountiful; and though many may smile at your sporting pretensions, we contend

that, take the county in every sense of the word, and there are very few which offer more sport—

"Are not the mountains, waves, and skies, a part
Of me and of my soul, as I of them?
Is not the love of these deep in my heart
With a pure passion?"

Yes: the waters of the Leven ran calmly towards the sea; the bright sun glittered on the mountain tops; the dark yellow leaves of autumn still clung to tree and shrub—as if loth, by falling, to tell of summer past-undisturbed by the slightest breath of wind, as we walked forth after the rest of night to look around us on a scene scene which hitherto had been hidden by utter darkness. The morning was one of those with which we are frequently gladdened during the latter days of October, which speaks forcibly of what the summer has been, what the winter may be -bright, warm, and cheering in its sunshine, but clear, cold, and saddening in its shade; yet as unclouded as if it came to usher joy alone into this world of anxiety. Reader, bear with us a moment while we look on the beautiful scene before us; one not often sought, but yet unquestionably, if not more rare in natural beauty, equally so to almost any other spot in the Highlands, as offering a succession of varied and lovely landscapes. Among the singular shaped mountains which rear their lofty summits as you stand on the south side of Ballahulish, that which most particularly attracts the eye is the Pap of Glencoe, a large conical mountain which overhangs the lake; the naked surfaces, abrupt declivities, and various colours of others, forming a most striking and interesting contrast to the green and woody slopes which border the shores of the Leven.

But we must dwell no longer on scenes like these,

or we shall fail to reach the sporting locale whither we were bound ere the castle bell toll the hour of midnight; neither shall we attempt to say more in reference to the route we that day travelled o'er, saye that few present more beautiful scenes, and few more abounding with interest alike for sportsman and tourist. We made our way as rapidly as a pair of ill-conditioned and ill-fed horses could drag a ramshackling old phäeton, which we had hired at the ferry-house; arriving at Fort William ere midday, and at Fort Augustus in good time to reach Glenmoriston, four miles distant, ere the family dinner hour. Most persons in the present day are well aware that Fort William and Fort Augustus—the one situated on Loch Eil, the other at the western extremity of Loch Ness-are two of the five Scottish forts retained by the terms of the Union; though the latter is now garrisoned simply by a sergeant's guard, and the former by a subaltern's party detached from the regiment which for the time may be quartered at Glasgow or Fort George. We take this opportunity, therefore, to give a hint to the officers of such regiments, should there be sportsmen among them—and in what mess are there not many first-rate ones?—to look out for this detachment. Their military duties they will doubtless find not very onerous, and their sporting propensities may be gratified to the utmost bent of their inclination. Let them only be prepared with a good double-barrel, a rifle, and fishing-rods (for flies, powder and shot, &c., they can obtain at Fort William,) some good cigars and tobacco, with a few books, and if they have only half the gentleman-like manners and habits which officers of the British army generally have, there is scarcely a day throughout the season that they may not obtain permission

to shoot, fish, and even stalk deer, ad libitum. Some of the best salmon fishing is close at hand, grouse hills surround them, and deer may be found within the distance of a two hours' ride on a shelty.

Well we recollect the time when we would have given a year's pay, had we been in the army, to have found ourselves thus located; and we doubt not that, were all the subalterns now on detachment in Ireland told to hold up their hands for such a quarter in Scotland, the numerical uplifting would be sufficient to secure the Westminster election.

CHAPTER IX.

ARRIVED at Fort Augustus, or Kil-y-a-Whoimin, as it is still termed by Highlanders, we took one long look of admiration at the splendid lake, which lay stretched like a sheet of glass before us, in which the shadows of the surrounding mountains were distinctly visible; but as we proposed to spend some days amid this truly grand scenery, we shall, for the present, only add that we decided on proceeding thence to our resting place, about four miles distant by water. Having, therefore, hired a boat and two stout rowers, we prepared to do a little fishing on our way, being informed that some heavy trout resorted to that end of the lake, who are nothing loth to swallow a fly which trails at the stern of a boat, even when the bright-coloured shawls which ought to cover the shoulders of fair tourists are trailing there also. So we rigged our gear accordingly; and as the flies skimmed along the surface of the lake, and we reclined in full enjoyment, of the weather and the wild but beautiful scene around us, we will crave permission to relate a brief but saddening tale, as told to us by a kilted Highlander with whom we had joined in conversation, during the brief hour we had passed in our morning's ramble on the banks of Loch Leven.

Having alluded to the subject of the numerous

English sportsmen and sight-seers who now annually cross the Border, intent on sport or pleasure, he proceeded to inform us that he kenned well the time when a velveteen shooting jacket or an English face in Glencoe was as great a novelty as a railway might be to Ballahulish, even these days of steam and cotton-powder. "But," continued he, "even then we were not without the occasional presence of a stranger from the south; and a circumstance occurred in the neighbourhood where you last night slept, which, though years have since elapsed, can never be forgotten: indeed, it has left many sorrowful recollections on the hearths of the inhabi-

tants of this wild glen.

"It was late one evening, at the latter end of August, that a young Englishman, accompanied only by a fine setter (to which animal he appeared much attached), arrived at the North Ferry House, and solicited accommodation. He had apparently travelled from Fort William in a hired car, and his baggage consisted simply of a portmanteau, gun, and fishing-rod. It was therefore naturally concluded that his object was that of sporting, his appearance unquestionably denoting him to be a gentleman. No impertinent questions were therefore asked, and no information offered on his part as to his intentions or proceedings. He desired simply the accommodation of two rooms, which he stated he might require for some days; and having obtained them, quietly took possession, and retired to rest.

"For a few days subsequent to his arrival, little notice was taken of him or his pursuits: he walked out early, fishing-rod in hand, and returned home late. But in this there was neither cause for astonishment nor alarm, it being naturally concluded that he was desirous of visiting the interesting scenes

which abounded in the neighbourhood, and consequently passed much of his time in the open air. Added to this, he carried his rod; and if his sport proved successful, it was not likely he would be desirous of leaving it. It may readily be supposed that if in these enlightened days the landlady of a Highland hostelry is content to boil her own porridge, and leave her guest to the tender mercy of a barefooted damsel-of-all-work, that in those more remote to wish we allude, the good hostess of the ferry-house was not likely to be over attentive, it was not, therefore, till informed by her thrusty handmaiden that the gentleman took little or no food-that his meals, such as they were, remained in fact almost untasted-and that, on being questioned as to his wishes in reference to food, he had replied with perfect indifference as to the matter, and perfect satisfaction with anything which might be provided and for which he liberally paid, at other times showing great eccentricity and appearance of indisposition -that the good woman herself became desirous of beholding the person of her lodger; which, strange to say, had not previously been the case, although he had already resided several days under her roof. On proceeding, therefore, sufficiently early to the sitting apartment to insure the occupation of its tenant, she was not a little surprised to find herself not in the presence, as she had imagined, of a robust and healthy young man, who, all activity and energy, had ventured alone among these distant northern hills for sport and pastime, but the reality of the following portrait :-

"In the only tolerably comfortable chair which the room possessed, sat, or rather leaned, his head resting on his hand, a young man perhaps eight-andtwenty years of age: his figure was slight—indeed almost too slight to support the strength of life: his countenance, as he looked up on her entrance, though pale as death, was animate by an expression of intense care and thought, which caused a sense of actual pain to the observer; yet it was not positively the pallor of bodily suffering alone, but rather the worn and haggard appearance of intense, torturing, unyielding, mental agony, fast dstroying the body, till the last thread of life is snapped asunder. His faithful dog lay at his feet, from time to time looking on his sorrowing face, as if the poor animal desired to say-'Do not sorrow master! I, your untiring friend, am with you still.' On the rude sofa, on the chairs, indeed in every part of the room, were scattered books, gun, fishing-tackle-even pistols were there. Amid this mélange of sporting matériel, there could be no mistaking the position of the man -he was a gentleman, and had been a sportsman; indeed, his personal appearance and all around him proved most clearly that he had been accustomed to all the conveniences, and, moreover, the luxuries of life.

"Appearances, however, are often deceitful; but the voice is rarely so, as proving education, and seldom does it deceive in regard to gentle birth. When kindly accosted, therefore, as to his wants and wishes, his courteous and even calm replies, that he was well served and required nothing, satisfied the landlady on that score at least; and after numerous offers of attention, she felt convinced that if he ailed, neither complaint nor cause was serious; and ended her visit by requesting that her good man might be permitted to shew him the best pool for salmon, and the best burns for trout—as the day, of all others, was make for sport.

"A week thus elapsed: the stranger ate little

and drank less; and if the hints which were thrown out by the servant-lassie were true, he slept not at all, but passed the night is pacing his appartment. On some occasions, when the weather was brilliant, he never left the house; on others, though boisterous and wet, he was seen miles up the glen, sometimes with gun or fishing-rod in hand, always accompanied by his faithful dog; but game or fish he never brought home. To not a soul was he ever known to speak unaccosted; but when addressed, his replies were ever kind and gentle, as his hand was ever open to calls of charity-and consequently his person was soon known to the poor in the glen; and, save that his manner was eccentric, there were few who passed him without a feeling of respect and recognition of courtesy."

But we must conclude this painful tale: and we scarcely know why we have introduced it here, save that we listened to it from rough lips, which uttered words which came from a feeling heart; and this during a sporting excursion which memory ever recalls with interest too faithful to be forgotten. Moreover, we cannot but believe that there are few of our readers—indeed, we earnestly trust there lives not one, to whom its reality may give one moment's

pang.

"Twelve days had elapsed since the sportsman's arrival in the glen, when late one night—indeed at the very moment the house was about to be closed—a chaise drove up to the door, also from Fort William. In the interior sat a lady, but so muffled up that it was impossible to distinguish her countenance—in fact, save from her light and youthful figure, it would have been difficult to decide whether she were young or old. She requested, in a few words, to be informed if an English gentleman was residing

in the house; and having received a reply in the affirmative, begged to be shewn to his room. request was complied with. But over the scene of agony which there was said to have taken place, we must beg to draw a veil; for this simple reasonwe relate only from hearsay, which can seldom be depended on; and it is just possible, though we trust not probable, that there may be some one now living on whom such memories might fall heavily and painfully, and we desire to be the last to inflict such a blow. All, therefore we shall say is this—that ere morning dawned, with a countenance depecting intense anguish and remorse, still with a firmness as if compelled to perform a duty, for which he had for the last time braced the shattered nerves of his frail existence, rather than as one of pleasure, the stranger led back the lady, still closely wrapped, to the chaise, into which, with heart-rending sobs, she threw herself. It drove away; and he, returning to his apartment, refused all offers of aid or attendance, locked his door, and was alone.

"The few additional circumstances connected with this melancholy tale may be soon told: not, however, without sorrow and sadness. On going to his appartment, rather later than usual on the following morning his door was still found secured. To this fact, however, little heed was given; a simple remark being made, that the poor gentleman was doubtless fatigued after the occurrences of the night. When hours, however, had elapsed, and still no sign was given of his stirring, the landlady repaired herself to learn the cause; but still finding the door locked, she became alarmed, and immediately requested her husband to place a ladder to the window. He did so—when a horrid scene presented itself. On the floor, half-dressed, lay

extended the lifeless form of him who, during his short residence in the glen, by his mild and gentle manners and bearing, had made himself a general favourite. On the floor, covered by his life-blood, lay an open razer; and by his side, with eyes literally tearful, was found the first to welcome, the last to forsake—the ever-faithful friend of man—his

dog."

To those who may, either for sport or other pleasure, chance to pass by this fair glen, we will merely observe that in the basin of Loch Leven there are several islands. One of these is called St. Mungo's Isle, and has long been used as a burying place. It consists of two hillocks, one of which is appropriated to the inhabitants of Glencoe, the other to the people of Lochabar. These spots have much local interest, and carry with them many tales of Scottish history. In the former may now be seen an unostentatious stone, on which will be found the following simple inscription:—"E. L. Born A. D. 17—; died 18—Traveller! pass it not without a tear."

But let us now turn to scenes more bright to the mind, more pleasing to the memory of Highland sports and Highland quarters. "What's that?" A bounce and a plash. "By Job! we have him." And a fine salmon-trout of three pounds' weight was gently deposited in the boat; and in a few minutes more our keel grated on the stony shore which told us we had reached the territory of the Laird of Glenmoriston, the extremity of whose park or domain is watered on the south side by Loch Ness, and to the west by the waters of the rapid and beautiful river of Moriston, which flows o'er many a rock and stone, through the magnificent glen of that name, and at the entrance of which we landed at Invermoriston.

"Yet live there still who can remember well
How, when a mountain-chief his bugle blew,
Both field and forest, dingle, cliff, and dell,
And solitary heath the signal knew;
And fast the faithful clan around him drew."

We must decline entering into any save general details of the hospitalities so kindly and so courteously accorded to us by the amiable and highminded owner of the interesting castle of Invermoriston, by whose family, as well as himself, we were so frankly and cordially made welcome. With regard to our first day's dinner, therefore, we will merely state, for those curious in such matters, that its excellence and abundance, for the time being, entirely obliterated from our minds the painful internal recollections most feelingly engendered by the last two days of our travels through a land of scarcity, as regards the wants of luxurious bipeds. Salmon from the lake, grouse from the hills, trout from Moriston, and venison from the mountains, groaned on the board within; and without, on a terrace in front of the western dining-room window, groaned also, previous to our onslaught on the smoking viands so amply set before us, the discordant tones of a bagpipe-to us a barbarous uproar of unmusical sounds; to those who admire it, doubtless, a delightful solo: therefore, take your choice, readers, and no offence. The custom, however, is another question; to that we have no objection: it is sacred to the memories of days lang syne. And as regards the piper, he was a fine specimen of a race who need yield to none in Scotland, and in the battle front his mountain pipe might well sound savage and shrill, to

> "fill the mountaineers With the fierce native daring which instils The stirring memory of a thousand years."

In these peaceful days, however, when Highlandmen and Cockneys cast their flies in the same salmon-pool, and vie with one another in stalking the red-deer, no such stimulants are required for an onslaught on a venison pasty. But we can have no second thought as regards the impropriety, we may say the unjustifiable indelicacy, of publishing to the world at large the domestic habits of individuals, rich or poor, by whom we have been received with kindness and hospitality, though their residence may be in a Highland glen, and not on Richmond Hill; we shall therefore leave to the imagination of the hungry and thirsty all further details of cuisine and cellar: they may fancy, if they will it, the peculiarly excellent fried potatoes and kippered salmon served up for breakfast; they may discuss also the length of Mr. Grant's nose, and the colour of Mrs. Grant's dress. We shall leave them in that peace and happiness in which we found them; and a continuance in which, their christian lives, and the deserved estimation in which they are held throughout the Highlands, we would fain hope may tend, with God's blessing, to secure to them and theirs. For our own part, we could have lingered long, had time and duty permitted it, among those in whose hospitable mansion the spirit of true Highland cordiality reigns, surrounded by ease, elegance, and cheerfulness.-On local and sporting matters, however, our pen may flow on without fear of intrusion. And as late one evening we stood by the Laird's side, at an open window in front of the castle, and looked on the bright and refulgent moon which shone o'er the wide waters of the Ness, and beheld the dark and lofty mountains on its southern bank, we scarcely felt the chill night air, so interested were we with his kind information in reference to the historical annals of the spot, as well

as with the details of its neighbouring sporting qualities.

The ancient castle of Glenmoriston, or Invermoriston, on the site of which the present mansion stands, was built by John Grant, more commonly called John A'Chragan, between the years 1440 and 1450. This bold chieftain, or clansman, as he might then more properly be termed, whose name stands pre-eminent in the history of those days when bloodshed and neighbouring feuds were ripe among the clans, was the direct ancestor of the present owner, James Grant, Esq., of Glenmoriston—by courtesy or Highland custom on all occasions addressed as Glenmoriston; indeed, when first introduced to his amiable wife, we are not quite satisfied that we did not "hope Mrs. Glenmoriston was in good health," the name of Grant being quite out of the question in the glen. In the year 1715, the above ancient stronghold was burnt to the ground by the troops of the government, and the whole property of A'Chragan forfeited to the crown. Mr. Grant's grandfather, however, repurchased his own estate-at least such was literally the case; and he built on the blackened foundation a residence of wood, to replace the ancient pile of his ancestors.

The existence of this structure, however, was of short duration, for in the year 1745 the King's troops again applied the torch, and the wooden fabric blazed into light on the dark waters of the Ness, as a beacon for the gathering of neighbouring clans, that their chieftain was in danger. Such men as these, however, were not to be easily subdued by fire or sword, and once more the present interesting structure rose from the solid ruins of its ancient strength, from the remnants of which it was literally built on the ashes of its predecessors. Nevertheless, the

property was once more forfeited to the crown, and the name of Glenmoriston stood prominent in the list of attainted Highland proprietors for rebellion; but by the act, it is presumed, of some unknown friend to the family even to the present hour, his name was erased; and from that time the heathered hills and dark mountains, fair fields and spacious domains, of the Grants, were left in their peaceful possession. And may the well-known loyalty of heart, and liberality of conduct and opinion of its present possessor, secure it to him and his heirs for ages! For any other details of this ancient family, to such of our readers who desire it, we will refer them to a pleasing little book, called "Ascanius, or the Wanderer"—a work giving rather an interesting account of the Prince's wanderings after the battle of Culloden. That will tell them something—but a visit to the glen will please them more.

The present house stands on a lawn, within two gun-shots of the waters of the Ness. Nothing can be more picturesque and sheltered than its present position. To the west the small park is encircled by the river Moriston, which, rushing over a beautiful waterfall within the pleasure grounds in the immediate vicinity of the castle, joins the lake below. The north or rear of the house is protected by lofty and wood-clad mountains, at the base of which a few houses repose, among which may be numbred a clean and comfortable little inn: the whole embowered in trees, mark the village of Glenmoriston as one scarcely surpassed in Switzerland by the wildness and beauty of its situation.

ness and beauty of its situation.

CHAPTER X.

MAJESTIC was thy appearance, "Meal Four Vourine!" for such is the name of the lofty mountain which stands pre-eminent over its more humble neighbours, to the north of the castle of Glenmoriston. Grand indeed were thy towering outlines, though half veiled by the morning's mist, as we walked forth early after a good night's rest, and caressed the noble and beautiful deer hound, who, stretched on the lawn, enjoyed the first rays of the rising sun. On the wild and magnificent scenery which surrounded us on all sides, however, we must no longer dwell, but proceed to tell a tale of hound and hart.

Once more, however, the sound of the pibroch called the castle inmates together; and having refused the morning's dram, and made a furious attack on the centre of a cold grouse pie, which succumbed to our onslaught—and lighted our cigar, the Laird threw his plaid around him, and kindly proposed a visit to the kennel, being well aware of the great admiration in which we held the noble race of deer-hounds, some of the purest of whose breed have, from time immemorial, been possessed by the ancestors of Glenmoriston. On our arrival at the kennel, the doors being thrown open, three fine rough deer-hounds, and a very handsome smooth hound, of the

same breed, and of equal size and strength, rushed out on the grassy space before us; indeed, had we not moved on one side, we should, unquestionably have measured our length on the ground. In addition to these-we speak only of deer-hounds-was our friend of the morning, who joined in their gam-bols and delight of freedom; he, however, on all occasions being allowed to range at large, the faithful friend and companion of his master, by whom he is greatly valued-and the pet and favourite of the children; for, notwithstanding their great courage and ferocity when roused to action, the temper of these dogs is most gentle. This gallant animal has been the subduer, as we were then informed, of no less than eighteen stags, which, single-handed, he has either brought to bay or killed; and was the sire of two of those released from the kennel, as also of our own dog Bran, mentioned in a former part of these pages; who like his parent, is one of the finest specimens of his race that can possibly be conceived. Indeed, without the slightest intention of exalting his character because we have the satisfaction of owning him, but rather in gratitude to the donor by whom he was presented to us as a puppy, we should not fear to produce him against any dog of the same breed now living, as a remarkably fine specimen of his race.

"I am not," said Mr. Grant, "the original founder of the noble breed of animals in this glen; indeed, a long minority on my part caused a serious degeneration in the sporting superiority which here maintained its pre-eminence in the time of my predecessors. In fact, there now remains to me but few relics of their prowess, either in the sports of the field or valour in arms." A long gun, however, which we had the pleasure of handling, still remains

as an heirloom in the family. It is of great antiquity and curiosity, and certainly two hundred years old. It is well known in the locality by the name of the "Alandick," and is of Dutch manufacture. The barrel is a very fine one, at least six feet and a half in length, and curved at the breech. It holds a prominent place in the arm-rack, and is still an excellent ball gun, and many a red-deer has fallen to its unerring truth. There is also in the same rack a six-barrelled gun, or short rifle, of curious construction and great antiquity, with which its owner has also been known to bring a hart to bay. Such are

the heirlooms of the Highlands.

But let us return to the dogs. The first which entered the kennels of Glenmoriston, subsequent to his majority or accession to the property, was sent to him by Captain M'Donald, of Moray, in the Braes of Lochabar. This gentleman, since dead, was a landholder and farmer of the old Highland class, and a first-rate sportsman. Having heard of a pure and beautiful bitch of the same breed, whose character stood high for her great courage and lasting power in the chase of the deer, then the property of the late Thomas Mackenzie, of Applecross, Glenmoriston suggested that either the one or the other should endeavour to keep up this precious breed of dogs, the pure animal becoming daily more scarce in the Highlands. Mr. Mackenzie, however, having a far greater taste for literature than sporting, declined the task, and the lady forthwith became domiciled at Invermoriston; from which period, now about thirty years ago, the breed has remained uncontaminated, in those parts, at least, of which we had the pleasure of seeing the few remaining specimens. We have since been informed that Glenmoriston has relinquished his dogs, as also the care of their augmentation—in which, at one period, he took great interest—to Mr. E. Ellis, of Glengarrick; at least such is the name of his shooting quarters; and as this gentleman is a first-rate sportsman, has the means, and, like ourselves, is an enthusiast with regard to these rough deer-hounds, we may fain hope he will restore them to their original size and splendour. The trouble and difficulty of rearing them and keeping them pure in breed is, however immense. Cross them but once, and a smooth piled puppy will be introduced among the litter, as has been the case with Mr. Grant's dogs; and ever afterwards one or two of the puppies will be smooth-haired. We must however, state, that the fact of their smoothness does not always detract from their fleetness or courage. The puppies are extremely delicate, and require constant care and attention; but, the casualties of youth and distemper once over, they become extremely hardy; as an instance, we will merely observe that the splendid dog which had welcomed us in the early morning, on our first proceeding from the castle, has been known to lie out night after night on the lawn, when the ground has been knee deep with snow; and this with shelter at hand, had he desired to take advantage of it. If properly trained, their courage and endurance of fatigue can be surpassed by no domesticated animal; but, on the contrary, if mismanaged, and led to a task beyond their strength ere they are full grown and well broken, should they fail or get severely wounded, they will never recover their courage. Glengarry, a name familiar as birch-trees in the Highlands, to history and to most sportsmen, who, at one period, possessed many of these dogs, was in the habit of crossing them, and some other owners continue to do so in the present day. There is no question, however, that they act erroneously, that is to say, if they require a race of animals to hunt, chase, kill, or bring to bay a red-deer. The deer-hound is either a deer-hound, or it is a mongrel; there can be no intermediate race. Neither can there be a question that the animal intended by a higher power for a particular object, is the fit, proper, and superior one over all others. For instance, cross a greyhound with a Newfoundland dog; then he may kill a hare, but how?-why, by chance; but he will never win a cup at the Altcar. For the same reason, cross a noble deerhound with a mastiff or a bulldog, as many have done; he may, in some trifling degree, increase some particular quality of the latter, but he will lose many of the fine qualities and sagacities of the former, which are alone to be found in the pure-bred deerhound. For instance, Glengarries had large feet and great ugly heads, and other defects of proportion, which made them unable to run on rocky or hard ground, without soon becoming lame and useless.

But were we to write volumes on the interesting subject of this breed of dogs, we should only add, Get the pure race, and you will have the true one. Treat them and train them properly, and they will prove the best and only dogs which ought to be used in the noble sport of deer-stalking, whether in the open chase, or as the means of running a wounded deer and bringing him to bay. They are a great acquisition to any sporting kennel; and, even when far away from the Highlands, we know of few more magnificent and faithful companions during a morn-

ing's ramble, or by a winter's fire-side.

A few years since, Glenmoriston most kindly sent us two puppies of the purest breed; and we were fortunate enough to obtain another, equally pure and handsome, from the same part of Scotland. Of

the dog we have already spoken; he lives, as fine a specimen as can be of his race. The bitch was as beautiful and graceful an animal as could be imagined; but with the peculiarity which is particularly prominent in these animals, she was not much more than half the size of the dog, but so fleet that we constantly and most unwisely used her to chase the mountain hares; and after a hard day on the hills of Meggernie, when the weather was unusually hot for October—and probably from her youth—she was seized with convulsions, and, much to our regret, her bones lie beneath the sod of her native hills. The third is now in Ireland. She produced nine beautiful puppies by the dog; but, notwithstanding every care, they all died. These dogs were never kept in kennel, save at night; during the day they had, as they do now, their entire freedom, and were our constant companions, whether riding or walking; indeed, they had the entrée of every room in the house. Their food was a matter of perfect indifference as to the choice-anything which was to be had from the kitchen; and under this treatment no dogs could possibly thrive better: indeed, when Glenmoriston saw the dog he had kindly sent as a puppy at two years old, he admitted he was one of the finest animals he ever beheld.

Did space permit it, we could tell endless tales of their sagacity; we will, however, only name one, with regard to their being excellent water dogs, and then close the subject. For a season we resided at a house, the garden or lawn of which extended to the banks of a tolerably wide river; on this river we had a small skiff, in which, both summer and winter, we constantly crossed to the opposite bank. On all occasions, whatever the weather, even with snow on the ground, the moment the boat was pushed from

the shore, in plunged, not only the deer-hounds, but two smooth grey-hounds; and had we rowed backwards and forwards a dozen times, these animals would have followed. On one occasion, we scarcely recollect why, the deer-hound bitch, then not eighteen months old, was sent to a friend who resided at least a mile on the opposite side of the river. On the first night after her departure, we heard a howling under the bed-room window; and on looking out, not only discovered her ladyship, but also, from the dripping of her shaggy coat, that she had swum the river at midnight to return home; and this she repeated, in the depth of winter, on two successive nights. And in reference to their gentleness, we will simply add, that these fine animals have often been seen stretched before a blazing fire, with an Angola cat literally resting his head between their fore legs.

Having enjoyed a view of the kennel, the mist of the mountains thickened instead of clearing as the day advanced; and not ourselves being particularly robust on that occasion, the Laird kindly suggested we should take a look around his home domain, and defer a sporting excursion to the hills till the following one. As we walked along, therefore, careless of the threatening shower, he favoured us with a few details of his neighbouring deer-forest. In addition to his outlying distant forest, if such it may be called, he has recently appropriated a moderate proportion of the glen entirely as a harbour for deer, of about three miles in length, and two in breadth; and it is "prospering charmingly"-these are his own words. Forty or fifty deer may be found there any morning that a sportsman desires a shot; but they are careful, and very properly so, of destroying too many stags: hinds, therefore, as yet, are

alone permitted to be killed; nevertheless, the game book of 1845 scores ten stags. And the tenant who rents a shooting higher up the Glen—we believe Sir H. Meux—also killed ten last season; but, if we are not mistaken, in this account were numbered two or more hinds. Lord Lovat had also a deer-forest joining, or on the opposite side of the Glen to that of Glenmoriston, and he also had good sport during the season of 1845. In fact, not less than thirty or forty stags succumbed to the deadly rifles of these true sportsmen—and doubtless they had some very agreeable pastime; yet the stock increases rather than otherwise.

Of the neighbouring grouse hills, there are few better in Scotland: blackcocks are also abundant, as well as mountain hares. Ptarmigan are not wanting, and, in addition to which, there is some first-rate duck shooting in the season. The fishing in the Moriston is very good, both as regards salmon and trout; and we feel satisfied that no fair sportsman would be refused by Glenmoriston who might desire to throw his fly therein. And now, a word of the lake, on the borders of which we stood watching the progress of the Glasgow steamer, which is a most desirable accommodation to those who possess shooting quarters on the line of the so-termed Caledonian Canal. This beautiful lake is twenty-two miles in length; its breadth—save near Castle Urquhart, where it is broader—being about two miles. Its depth is very great; indeed, opposite a rock called the "Horse-shoe," it has been found to be 140 fathoms. From a neighbouring eminence, a full view may be obtained, for it is almost straight from end to end, running east and west; and its sides, which are steep, rocky, and wooded, are most pleasing to the eye of the traveller, as well as to

the sportsman, for they yield game of all kinds. Many peculiarities are attached to these wide and extensive waters; on which, however, we shall only dwell in reference to their sporting qualities. Owing to their great depth, they never freeze; and, during intense cold weather, a steam rises in the air as from a furnace; in fact, ice brought from any other place and thrown into Fort Ness, would immediately thaw. Yet no water freezes sooner than that from Loch Ness, if taken into the house, or from the lake, and placed elsewhere. Moreover, it is considered as remarkably salubrious; in fact, many come long distances to take advantage of its qualities. And it is a well-known fact, that during seven years, the garrison of Fort Augustus lost not a single man by death-as was generally supposed from the quality of the water, and the salubrity of the neighbouring mountain air.

The salmon taken from this lake are in season from Christmas to the latter end of September. Trout of great weight, as also pike and eel, are numerous; and during winter there is endless sport to be secured, from the numerous wild mews, wild ducks, and widgeons, which abound there. The surface of the lake is sometimes violently agitated by the wind, which blows furiously between the steep mountains by which it is hemmed in; and the waves are at times quite Biscayan. Indeed, a curious fact is related of an occurrence which took place on the 1st November, 1755, at the same period with an earthquake at Lisbon. The waters rose and flowed up the lake from east to west with vast impetuosity, breaking over the banks in waves, at least three feet high; and a heavy boat, laden with wood, was literally carried three times high on shore, and then dashed back again by the receding waters,

0 3

till destroyed. At the same period, an island on a small lake in Baddanoek was literally carried from its base and flung on the main land; yet at neither the one nor the other place was the agitation felt on

the neighbouring shores.

The afternoon having set in dull and gloomy, we passed the remainder of this agreeable day in trying our prowess with rifle and pistol at a target placed conveniently for such practice in the park; and, from the many successful shots which struck the bull's-eye, anticipation was ripe as to the slaughter of red-deer on the following morning. But we soon found out, by practical demonstration, that the nerves and pulse which beat calmly before a wooden mark, are at fever heat when the antlers of a hart appear in view; and the best shots in the kingdom, who might hit the neck of a bottle at one hundred and fifty yards, or a shilling thrown in the air, need not be disheartened should they miss their first red-deer at five-and-twenty paces.

The inspection of an ancient shield, carried by the great grandfather of Glenmoriston, namely, "John A'Chragan," at the battle of Killicrankie, through which was the hole of a musket, as also a pistolball, and which ancient relic is verified as actually having been used by that chieftain, from the records of those present in the action—and a few remarks from the present chief, as to his being the only one of his race who had never taken part in a military life—closed the light hours of our first day's visit to the glen; and the shrill notes of the pibroch again informed us it was time to join the family circle in

the refectory.

At an early hour on the following morning, which dawned fresh and fair, an open carriage stood ready at the door to convey us to a convenient point for

commencing the sports of the day. For some miles, we followed the route of "Ascanius" up the beautiful glen, which, in various breadths, was clothed by dense masses of trees of every kind, growing almost to the very summits of the high and rocky hills; the river, migrating and roaming, at times dashing with violence from side to side of the deep, narrow, and rocky channel, which in the course of ages it has worn for itself; at others, escaping, thundering and foaming, it encloses some wooded islet or isolated rock, where the aged pine holds undisputed sway, and, luxuriating in freedom, shoots its weatherbeaten stem into a thousand irregular forms. Nothing can be more wild and luxuriant, nothing more beautiful, than the southern entrance to Glenmoriston. Having arrived, however, at the appointed spot, we were welcomed by keepers, gillies, deerhounds, and pointers, it being proposed in the first instance to try for blackcock and roe-deer, that abound in the low ground and slopes of the mountains, which here became more open and heathered; an outlying deer might also, perchance, be met with; as there, unlike their habits in the more open and extensive forests in Scotland, they harbour much in the woods, occasionally feeding on the grass slopes, at other times reposing in the warmth of its sunshine, but on the slightest alarm instantly returning to the deep recesses of their coverts. Glenmoriston, as well as his clansmen of the glen, are, however, thoroughly acquainted with their man-œuvres, and the eye and local knowledge of such sportsmen are not easily to be deceived; so with justice we felt assured that our ignorance in such matters could not be better guided than by attending to their instructions, and by following their example. Guns were therefore loaded, and rifle-balls rammed home, and we breasted the mountain side. But soon the sport commenced: bang on the right, bang again on the left, a double shot in the centre, told of death among the feathered tribe; and a hare, endeavouring to escape up the hill side, fell to our unskilful aim. We had scarcely arrived at a thin belt of fir and birch trees, ere a gillie apprised us that red-deer were on foot.

"Halt here a wee bit," said he, "anent this rock,

and they'll just be ganging this way."

We did as he desired; and, a rifle being handed to us, we couched behind a rugged rock, heartbeating and nervous, for the coming of these timid and beautiful animals, whom we desired thus cruelly to slaughter for a moment's pleasure. If this thumping of the heart takes place on the expectation of a roe-deer, we remarked, as thus we lay concealed, the thump will break the string asunder when on a similar watch for the nobler game of red-deer. They came, however, true as the gillie had predicted. A shot from the nearest sportsman, echoing through the mountains, warned us to look out; and we did so, all eyes and anxiety, when at last four swift and elegant roe-deer bounded like lightning across the rocky ground, within thirty yards of our position, and rushed along the hill side towards another small cover at hand. Bad as we admit our shooting qualities to be, we felt at the moment assured that such large objects, and so near, could not be missed, notwithstanding the speed to which fear had given additional wings; indeed, we fancied we already grieved o'er the dead carcass of the beautiful creature, so remorselessly slain in the fleeting moment of sporting excitement. We were never more mistaken in our lives: cool as we attempted to be-careful as we imagined our aim to be-ere the report of our





rifle had warned our neighbours of our luck in getting a shot, the ball had struck a stone at least half a yard to the right of the roe, and they fled on unseathed into the cover at hand. This was our first and last chance at a roe that day; in other respects, we did a fair share of the duties of the morning, and certainly yielded to none in the enjoyment we experienced. At mid-day we halted, and assembled the party near a refreshing mountain rivulet; and, though we are by no means an advocate for these gastronomic interruptions to a day's sport, yet, we must own, a pleasant half-hour's rest, and a trifle of cold grouse, in such a scene, and on such occasions, with an afternoon's deer-shooting in prospect, is by no means the most disagreeable moment of one's life. Seated, therefore, on a heathered bank, with a merry group around-in fact, forming one of those pleasing pictures which Landseer or Taylor can far better paint than we can pen-as the smoke from various cigars and pipes curled in wreaths through the clear air, we contemplated the success of the morning. A beautiful roe, still graceful in death, which had fallen to the unerring aim of one of our companions, and which he beheld with much satisfaction-several mountain hares, blackcocks, and four brace of grouse, lay before us; and a very pleasing sight it was, and not bad sport late in the season. But fatigue is little thought of with game in view, and the whole party were soon prepared for another start.

"We will cross the river," said our leader, "and doubtless you will then have a shot at a red-deer: be calm, however—take time, and ere nightfall you may

yet tell of something better than a roe."

We descended to the banks of the stream, in order to cross over by some rocks and large stones, so placed as to admit of a dry passage; when evident signs and tracks of deer having also recently crossed, gave us renewed hopes. Oscar, one of the deer dogs, was nose to the ground and ears erect, pulling hard at the gillie, who with much difficulty prevented his breaking loose. Having reached the opposite shore, we came to a halt, in order to arrange our forces; and after a little discussion among keepers and foresters, our line of battle was formed, and we found ourselves in company with one of the Laird's sons, a most agreeable and amiable lad, now in India-to whom, should these pages ever meet his eye, we would recall with thanks his courtesy and kindness on that occasion-the shouts of laughter and humour which enlivened our walk home after this day's sport, when scarcely one of us could otherwise have walked a yard farther; indeed, as regards ourselves, to this hour we believe we have never recovered the fatigue and excitement, which caused us subsequently a sharp attack of fever and indisposition.

But to proceed. With our kind conductor, we skirted a great portion of the thick wood or covert, our companions also being appointed to favourable localities for the passing of the deer; and at length we found ourselves fairly ensconced in a thicket, from which we commanded the crossing of two long rides or paths, cut in the recesses of the forest; and a multitude of beaters being thrown in, Heaven knows where, we awaited the coming of the sovereign of the glen—barring Glenmoriston himself. What passed beyond, as thus we lay secluded in that retired spot, we cannot here recount, inasmuch as a monthly volume of the "Colonial Library" would not admit of it. But as long as the breath of life remains to us—and we would wish to speak our natural feelings, though many may say "stuff!"—

we shall never forget that day. Half an hour elapsed in pleasing dialogue, in a sort of demi-tone. A joke was passed—a smothered laugh—the proposal to light a cigar. The deer will smell the smoke: their scent is very acute. Nevertheless, we both wished it. How dreadfully cold! Never mind, a shot will warm you. We sink knee-deep in wet! Ah, that's nothing, when you're used to it! be patient. Well we might! an hour elapsed, and not a sound. Can we be well placed? Decidedly so—none better. We are frozen! Never mind.

Hark! a shout! Bang! The sound died away. We started up-held the rifle firmly. Look out! A blackcock passed us. "D-n those blackcocks!" at any other time how welcome! Another shoutanother bang! Half an hour more elapsed-we could scarcely brave it longer. Frozen-half drowned -the first hour's merriment began to flag. Had we only been allowed a cigar! but then red-deer are not fond of the smell of baccy. We coughed.—You must not cough! We sneezed.—No sneezing! We danced .- You must not dance. This is forest deershooting, is it? A jungle, for all we cared. Alas! how long we had desired such luck! but then, like the child who cries for a toy, having obtained it, we could have flung the treasure away. But as yet we had not obtained it. Two hours had we remained in this damp and cold seclusion, when, lo! a louder report saluted our anxious ears; close at hand the echo came, and all our miseries were about to cease.

"Be patient—for Heaven's sake, be calm!" said our young companion, "or you will miss him."

We have heard the whistling ball, which tells of danger past, fly harmless o'er our head in scenes of bloodshed and danger—we have heard the shriek of agony occasioned by its paralyzing stroke—we have seen Death busy in the ranks of men, and have known the hour of agony and pain: in such moments we have thought of home and loved ones far away, and the heart has beat quick, and the nerves have been unstrung. We have also felt the joys of pride and pleasure, and known, which many ne'er can count, moments of joy and excitement, which repay, and well repay, for long long hours of bitterness and anxiety. Yet, though folly may it be to declare it, never have we felt have the feverish excitement that was caused us at the moment when, looking up the open forest side which lay in our front, we beheld the approach of about twenty red-deer coming towards us at full speed. Perhaps it was the coldperhaps the wet, or the long waiting-we know not which-but so nervous were we, that scarcely could we lift the rifle to our shoulder. We managed, however, to shake off partially this feeling which unnerved us, and, bringing the rifle to the shoulder, prepared for the coming deer. The quick eye of our young companion, however, accustomed to such sport, immediately perceived that the herd were composed of hinds, some having calves still by their sides, and not an antler was among them. therefore seized the arm, which in another instant would perhaps have pulled the trigger, and by destroying the mother, at the same time have murdered the son. And, lo! they passed-a noble group. To us they appeared as a drove of oxen-so large they loomed in the shades of the forest, and magnified by the excited state of our nerves. They passed, however, rapidly on, and were lost to view. We know not why, but this scene totally revived us: we recovered nerve, and felt that we had acted with patience, if not foresight. Altogether, we were recalled to the fact, that we desired to kill a stag; what we might have done, had not our young friend been at hand, we know not, but probably we should have wounded a hind. As for him, we hope ere this he has bagged a brace of elephants and lordly tigers. But our patience and forbearance were amply rewarded. A brief time elapsed ere again the murderous voice of powder proclamed the deer at hand; and with nerves well knit we prepared ourselves for action. Once more the opening was darkened by the coming deer. In this instance the number was far less, but the antlers, the forked antlers, adorned their lofty heads.

"Take the leader," said our young chieftain,

"and hit him in the heart. I shall not fire."

We did as he desired. Hidden by the trees, we, calmly as circumstances would permit, awaited the moment when the animal was well nigh abreast of our hiding-place, and then fired as he rapidly advanced. Almost immediately after the report, at not more than thirty yards from where we stood, the deer fell on its knees, and then with a sudden bound recovered itself, and fled through the forest. The gillie near at hand-for the moment we had forgotten him--and who held a fine deer-hound, immediately slipped the noble animal, who at once gave chase to the wounded deer; and we followed, in eager and breathless hope of the result, which, however, we were not fated to know ere the light of day had closed the glen in darkness; and had that pleasure been afforded us by time and sufficient remaining strength to follow on his lengthened track, we could ill have related here that which has been so forcibly and beautifully described by abler pens, in their accounts of wounded stags at bay. On our arrival at the hospitable castle, a packet of letters, some not unimportant, apprised us that by daybreak

P 2

we must start for the south; and the feverish and sleepless night which followed our pleasures of the preceding day warned us to lose no time. Lucky for us that we acted with decision, or we might not now be living to tell the tale.

A short time afterwards we were greeted with a letter from our merry companion in the swampy hiding-place, accompanied by a handsome pair of antlers; an extract from which we subscribe:—

"You killed your first stag, or, at least, wounded it to the death, for it has been recovered; and I have the pleasure of sending you a haunch of venison and a fine pair of antlers. The latter you can hang up in your hall, if you have one; if not, preserve them in recollection of the sports of the glen."

We have them still.

CHAPTER X.

WE have hitherto been so entirely engrossed with sporting anecdote as to have dwelt but cursorily on subjects more immediately connected with the habits and pursuits of those who dwell in that most interesting portion of Her Majesty's dominions termed the Highlands, over so large a tract of which we wandered, alike on craggy mountain top and through fertile glen. We are now, however, about to visit the wild and majestic Corryarrick, once more to crave for a night the kind hospitalities of the Laird of Invermoriston, and thence, passing by the northern road, which skirts the border of Loch Ness, to have a peep at that ancient capital to which the neighbouring waters grant a name. We shall, however, speak of persons and places as we have heretofore, endeavoured to speak, in all kindness; of persons as we found them, of places as we saw them, without the slightest endeavour to illustrate by poetical fiction, or "set down aught in malice." With the conviction that theory must ever give way to facts, conjecture to certainty, general views and hasty sketches must not be substituted for accuracy of description or truthfulness of delineation. Human manners, under every variety, must be caught from the life; and hence, we trust, may arise some value and interest from our simple details. In England, P 3

the name of Scotchman is used indiscriminately; but we may remark, with little fear of contradiction, that the Highlanders differ from the inhabitants of the low country in almost every circumstance of life; their language, habits, manners, and, not lang syne, their dress, was equally unlike. Thus the resident of the land of milk and honey, as they formerly denominated it, would be ill-satisfied were he supposed to number as one of those who revel in "cakes and ale," in fact, the dweller amid the wilderness of mountains takes to his heart the pride of place from the native of the more fertile Lowlands. Indeed, this trifling matter of vanity as to birthplace may only be compared to the passion of jealousy in love. And thus to name a Scotchman only, without regard to his being a Highlander or Lowlander, would be as indefinite a term as would be that of calling a Frenchman an European.

With reference, however, to that portion of Great Britain termed "the Highlands" of Scotland, we will simply remark, that while they range over more than one-half of the whole of that interesting country, their productiveness-save as regards the recently understood valuable speculation in game, and the consequent pleasure of the chase, for which their wealthy neighbours of England are ready to pay any price demanded, and the still more recent discovery of wealth derived from the mountain sheep-farms — may be counted in proportion as a bushel in a well-filled grain store. This portion, however, of the country so denominated nevertheless extends from Dumbarton, on the river Clyde, near Glasgow, to the most northern part of the kingdom, in length exceeding two hundred miles, whereas it varies in breadth from sixty to one hundred-from

German Ocean to Atlantic Sea.

And there, in that large extent of country, while wildness and beauties of nature unsurpassed abound in the west, barenness, shivering discomfort, and nakedness, from the want of woodlands, is prominent in the more cultivated, but far less interesting, plains of the east. In fact, speaking plainly and truthfully-and we yield to few men-in regard to the extent of the Highlands, or other portions of Europe over which we have wandered, we should say, as well to the sportsman as to him who seeks the untiring interest of Nature's beauties in their wildness, visit these beauties, for pleasure or for sport, during the more genial season of summer or of autumn, and steer your course generally to the west; for if perchance your barque be windbound on the eastern coast, you may chance to exclaim, "For which of my sins am I doing penance here?"

As the sequel, however, will show, it was not our fate to practise always that which we herein preach

for the information of our neighbours.

The summits of the Grampian range were white with abundant snow, the silvery birch woods, beautiful 'mid summer fulness of leaf, now bowed their graceful heads from the weight of white hoar frost, the lawn without, similarly bedecked, hardened and crisp under foot, looked like a sparkling sheet of diamonds as the bright rays of a clear, full, winter's moon, surrounded by a myriad of glittering stars, shone o'er the waters of the Tay, as, within half gunshot of its wooded banks, we sat within our snuggery. Merry Christmas time was fast approaching. seventh of December, 184-, had well nigh closed for ever; three days alone remained ere a short truce would be permitted to the chirping grouse and raven-winged blackcock. On such a night, or, more properly speaking, on that very night of the year,

we sat in the aforenamed snuggery-snug enough and warm enough, we must admit, notwithstanding the bitter cold which reigned without; for the room which, for a season, we claimed as our own, measured somewhat less than twelve feet by eight; and while a fire blazed on the hearth, big enough and bright enough to roast a New Year's sirloin, curtains, shutters, and doors were closed. Moreover, as if determined to make the best of the warmth, our legs were deposited on the hob, not far distant from the top of the chimney-piece, our back reclined on a soft and well-cushioned arm-chair, and, while in our right hand we held for perusal the "Château d'If," our left secured a meerschaum, small in size, but well filled with c'naster, from which, ever and anon, the perfumed smoke curled up towards the ceiling, and served to brighten an imagination already wellnigh extended to the full, from the interest of the book we were perusing. This was the extent of our indulgences, for toddy we never drink, or aught else, while smoking; and although c'naster may not come quite up to the mark of more refined lovers of the aromatic weed, we find it cheaper, and it serves our purpose well.

We have already taken leave to remark, that we have not the power of placing mere simple facts before our readers in any other form than that in which they actually presented themselves to us, or of putting words in the mouths of men otherwise than as we heard them spoken; therefore must we leave our friends to tell their own tales, and call on memory for a faithful delineation of what they

told.

A fine curl of smoke had just risen in small circles towards the ceiling of our snuggery, forced up rapidly at the last moment doubtless from a more

vehement puff, caused by an exciting passage from the pen of Dumas, when the door opened, and a smiling face peeped into the room—a mild, an amiable face it was—and then a cough, doubtless the effect of the smoke. A hand was extended, and a hearty welcome given.

"How is it possible you can exist in such an atmosphere? Cold as it is unquestionably without, this room is like a baker's oven, and the smoke is more dense than the mist on the mountain top."

"Precisely: we were at this very moment on the top of Monte Christo, and a most treasurable mount

it is."

"Well, however interesting, put aside your book, and let me open the door, for I am half stifled; and then tell me, are you up to a ramble?"

"A ramble? Decidedly. Where and when?"

"Why, as to the where, I have frequently heard you express an intense desire to cross Corryarrick, and 'tomber,' as the French have it, on Kilyawhoimin or Fort Augustus, previous to leaving the Highlands, a desire in which I eagerly participate."

"Cross Corryarrick thus late in the season?"

" And kill an old woman."

"More likely to kill two young men; but are you in earnest? are you serious in your intentions? For if such an excursion be practicable thus late in the season, the very difficulties which present themselves are sufficient to induce us at once to desire to participate in your wanderings; and, above all things, we are anxious to see a snow-storm on the mountains."

"Snow-storms, believe me, are better seen from the window of this smoky den of yours. Nevertheless, the weather is brilliant and frosty, there are still three days to the 10th of December, and, as Yorkshire pies are eaten at York, there can be no possible reason why we should not have a grouse pie in the Highlands; and if the flavour be increased by the addition of a blackcock or a mountain hare, I think we may reckon on as good fare for Christmas day as our friends in the south."

"Your arrangements are positively delightful. The question is settled on our parts, so the sooner we start the better. Corryarrick, Kilyawhoimin, and

grouse pies for ever!"

Our friend departed to prepare for our adventurous ramble, to be commenced on the morrow, and we attempted to smoke another pipe, and read a few more pages; but our imagination flew so rapidly from D If dungeons to Corryarrick precipices, from Marseilles to Fort Augustus, that both book and pipe were soon laid by, and, ensconced to the nose in our downy couch, we soon slept too soundly to dream of care.

Ere the clock of St. Paul's had struck the mid-day hour in England's great metropolis, far in the north of Her Majesty's dominions, well and warmly clad, we sat on the box of the mail which rolled on its way towards Dunkeld. The sun shone brilliantly, the sky was clear and cloudless overhead, and the ground was hard and white with frozen snow beneath the wheels. Our difficulties, however, commenced right early, for scarcely had we started from the first place of changing horses, ere crack went a spring, or some other equally important portion of the vehicle; and at the very onset of our expedition, we barely escaped an overset, with the chance of being buried alive in the snow. The guard, however, an active but ill-paid servant of the crown, though well-remunerated slave to the public—to whose wants and comforts, if he be a wise individual, he pays far more

attention than to the mail-bags—speedily produced ropes, straps, &c., from his deposit of precautionary measures, and, having soon bound up the fracture, away we went again, little the worse, up hill and down brae, at a good steady pace, till we arrived at the well-known bridge which crosses the Tay from south to north, and joins the very entrance to the town of Dunkeld—glorious in forest and in gloom—beautiful locality when embosomed in the bright and cheerful graces of sunny spring—still more interesting and beautiful when bedecked with autumn's variety of coloured foliage—but at merry Christmas time, like the toy of a hamlet buried in a basin of snow, the sides of which are darkened by

the gloom of vast and dense woodlands.

Here we made an unusually long halt, to repair; and, although it would afford little interest to dwell at any length on the peculiarities and dreariness of a route now generally so well known and so much frequented—moreover, which, ere many years elapse, will be within the reach of all, both in regard to time and means—we must nevertheless crave permission to say a few words in reference to Blair in Atholl, which was the next point of any importance; for there we were again unusually delayed by the miserable state of the roads, which had once more shaken our spring out of joint. Therefore, while the blacksmith's hammer is at work, we will add that Blair in Atholl, which we surmise to be the proper cognomen, is one of those Highland gems whose local interests are equalled by few in the estimation of a sportsman, and scarcely less so to him who visits as a tourist such wild scenes of forest, glen, and woodland. The present chieftain of Atholl, now the head of his clan, was very recently better known to the world as Lord Glenlyon, and he well deserves the proud possessions of his forefathers; alike from the interest he takes in the welfare of his followers, the love which he appears to entertain for his native hills, and the consequent outlay and improvement of his noble patrimony, with many other causes tending to the welfare of those among whom he chiefly resides. and by whom he is much esteemed: and of these qualities, certainly not the least is his desire to keep up old family feelings, ancient costumes, and hereditary associations, with the word of kindness and by the hand of liberality, without recurring to the days of the broadsword and the sharp skenedhu. Yet, though we can speak of the pleasure of his personal acquaintance, and have received some kindness and courtesy at his hand, we must decline entering into any detail of his home peculiarities, for reasons of delicacy heretofore divulged. That we name him as a sportsman, however-aud there are few better who range o'er the steep sides of Benigloe, or level the rifle at antlers in Glenlilt-we need scarcely apologize when we add that, when it is borne in mind that he is extremely near-sighted, and moreover far from robust in health, it appears to us most extraordinary that he should ride and drive with the most consummate nerve-go through physical exertions almost unequalled, certainly rarely surpassed-over the same ground where sovereigns of yore, and princes of our own time, have made the welkin ring with rifle and with Mantons. We know not whether, at the moment we write, it is his pleasure, as was his wont, to keep hounds; but at the period to which our memory returns, he possessed not only a well-sized and well-bred pack of harriers, with which he afforded sport and pastime to himself and neighbours in the vales immediately adjacent to his ancient castle of Atholl, but also, being a constant resident on his property at Dunkeld, where he possesses a most beautifully situated and commodious cottage ornée in the ancient park of his ancestors, through which flows the rapid Tay, he was wont constantly to hunt from thence with the above hounds over the rich and luxuriant vale extending from Perth to the aforenamed town. Various and exciting was the sport he thus afforded his friends and neighbours, both Highland and Lowland; and it was not seldom that, having secured a noble red-deer from his neighbouring forest of Atholl, and having shorn him of his graceful antlers, and conditioned him with hard food, he was turned before the hounds, almost wild from his native hills; and, under such circumstances, as may readily be supposed, frequently affording a rare gratification to those sufficiently well nerved and mounted to follow the chase over so wild a country, so difficult to cross. On one of these occasions, in the springy freshness of March—the scene is now before us, clear to the mind's eye as if it were yesterday-we formed one of a small party of merry horsemen, who were fortunate enough to meet the hounds in question at a small road-side inn on the highway from Perth to Dunkeld: more fortunate still were we on finding ourselves mounted on a gallant light grey mare, one of the very best fencers, and most enduring of animals, it was ever our delight to ride to hounds; though, in truth, she was not exactly a Derby nag in regard to pace. His Grace the chieftain-for recollect, we are in the Highlands -approached to welcome us at the meet, mounted on an animal which, for blood, bone, and symmetry, Melton might have well been proud of. Beneath his velvet hunting-cap there appeared a pair of spectacles, which, to those who looked around on the country we were about to cross, caused some degree of astonishment, as it was quite evident that good eye-sight, as well as nerve, would be required to their utmost. Nevertheless, we remained but a brief time to discuss the remnant of a cigar, and partake of the Edinburgh ale and London Porter (probably brewed at St. Andrews), which was liberally offered to the party, ere the king of the forest was uncarted; and, having for a moment exposed his splendid haunches to the admiring field, trotting gently up an acclivity, he tossed his noble head as if in disgust at the affront offered by the deprivation of his forked antlers, snuffed up the air in disdain at its Lowland murkiness, and then, with a bounding gallop, bade adieu to hound and horse, at a pace which few could have complained of, even in these days ef railway hunting, and which few could have followed for any lengthened period over such a country.

A brief law having been granted to the stag, the pack was laid on, and, immediately taking up the scent, away they raced, without hesitation or check.

The first portion of the run crossed an enclosed and heavy country, with tremendous fences; then came comparatively open, undulating ground, composed of stony, heathered hills: here, boggy moorland of some miles in extent; there, cultivated lands intersected by ravines, far more difficult to ride over, in our humble opinion, than the stiffest flight of gates: then we approached hill and stony dale, then easy riding land, fir plantations, and heathered braes, without check or hindrance, till we came to a sudden halt on the banks of the Tay, which there rushed foaming past us, unfordable, and in considerable breadth of stream. We had then raced, for no time had been allowed for a moment's consideration, full nine miles from the uncarting point, when thus the hounds threw up their heads, and the few who had

been fortunate enough to keep the pack in view, cried, "Hold, enough!"-for the pace, which had been killing throughout, as well as the nature of the ground, was sufficient to stop the best blood and bone in the kingdom. Moreover, we had commenced late in the day, and having a long ride to our quarters for the night, through a wild country not well known to us, we felt it as well to take time by the forelock, and be wary of the shades of evening. Not so the gallant master of the pack, however; he well knew that the deer had crossed the Tay, making for some dense woodlands which skirted the opposite bank; to ford the river was out of the question; to swim it, still more so, for both horse and man would soon have been food for salmon. No chance therefore remained of resuming the scent, but that of riding for a bridge, some three miles distant from the spot where we had checked; thus, at least six intervened between the hounds and the slot of their game. And having attained these thick woodlands, where the deer was unquestionably sheltered, for of course we had tried every possible means to ascertain this fact previous to coming to a decision, any possibility of forcing him ere dusk, we felt was out of the question. We therefore turned our horse's head from the battle-field, and leisurely pursued our route towards a neighbouring Highland Castle, where we had been kindly invited to sojourn for the night. And never shall we forget our visit there, so long as memory with life exists. Having arrived at the portals of this truly splendid abode, situated in one of the most romantic and beautiful localities in Scotland, at no great distance from Dunkeld, we gave our horse to the servant in attendance, and thence proceeded to divest ourselves of the paraphernalia and dirt of the chase; and having substituted a more sombre garb. we were welcomed by our host in an apartment, the decorations, valuable pictures, and objects of vertu in which, would not have discredited the mansion of the richest peer of the realm. Having said this much, we may add that a similar appearance of elegance and wealth evinced itself in all other parts of the castle, even to the bed-rooms, where comfort and even luxury abounded. To make our tale the more readily understood, however, in its truthfulness and quaintness, we must add, without intentional offence. that while the proprietor of this noble château was absent, the duties of offering the well-known hospitality which generally there abounded, were left to the care of a younger brother, who, with many admirable qualities and most perfect breeding in manner and conduct, nevertheless fully carried out in practice, on most occasions, the theoretical cognomen of "Canny Scotchman." Thus, our expectations, as far as gastronomic indulgences were concerned, certainly bore no comparison with the luxuries and comforts by which on all sides we were surrounded; therefore, after having been warmly greeted by our host, we were by no means surprised at his assertion to the guests assembled, that he had nothing better to offer them than boiled rabbits, with which the estate supplied his table most abundantly. knowing full well the parsimonious character which he bore in the neighbourhood, although there are few better repasts than rabbits stewed with onions, as we looked around on the hungry faces of the company, and knew that our own appetite at this moment would have enabled us to eat our grandmother similarly stewed, we certainly felt, as the last word in the marriage ceremony informs us, amazed. still more so, in addition to our gratification, when, on crossing a fine entrance hall, filled with ancient

and curious implements of war and of the chase, on the dining-room door being thrown open, we beheld a large round table abundantly supplied with covers; in fact, on this occasion, a most ample and wellcooked repast was served, and we all set to with a vigour and determination to do justice to the viands, and houseur to the absent laird, whose well-known liberality we felt could alone have been the means of

securing to us so many creature comforts.

Now, it so happened, that one of the expected guests, a gallant Major of Infantry, who had joined in the chase in the morning, having lingered too long in the vain hope of discovering that we had been mistaken in our conviction of the deer's having crossed the Tay, did not reach the castle till we had made considerable havoe with a salmon fresh that morning from the river, and whose richness we were endeavouring to correct with just one gout of most excellent Cognac. The first glance at our hungry party convinced the soldier, and with reason, that no delay could be admitted for ablution or personal adornment, so he forthwith joined us at the table, booted and spurred, splashed, and in scarlet.

It would be difficult to explain at this remote period, the reason, if reason there existed, for such a cause; yet it was nevertheless apparent, that while the addition of the officer to the assembled company increased their merriment, it also increased the determination of the whole party to do ample justice to the good things so unexpectedly, yet abundantly, provided. Moreover, the reported character of our host's love of keeping his siller in his pouch, appeared—whether out of frolic or maliciousness, we will not presume to decide—to have caused so exciting a thirst to overcome the guests, that a bottle of elaret was scarcely placed upon the table ere it was

emptied; and this with such rapid succession, that an anxious, nervous, muscular twitching in the face of the absent laird's brother soon became too evident to be mistaken. This fact, however, only increased the ardour of attack; and the midnight hour was therefore near at hand ere we retired from the dining-room to the handsomely furnished drawing-room already named. The excitement, however, aided by the libations of claret so copiously imbibed by all, tended only to increase a desire for further excitement; and smoking was not only proposed, but acceded to.

To quit, however, the easy and luxurious seats in which we had ensconced ourselves, was out of the question; and by this time, the juicy grape had so happy an influence on our host, that, admitting his pocket to be generally closed, his heart was decidedly open on this occasion, to any desire, however strange, on the part of his guests. Long Turkish pipes, the humble clay, and the Havannah cigar, were therefore at once supplied—and as strange a scene presented itself as ever was, or perhaps ever will be, seen in this magnificent Highland sporting quarter.

Comfortably ensconced in a most luxurious armchair, sat, or rather lounged, the gallant officer, in full hunting costume, with a clay pipe in his mouth, from which the curling fumes of Dutch Cut wafted in clouds towards a beautiful sporting piece by Murillo, which adorned the opposite wall; in another equally luxurious chair, reclined a young English tourist, with a cherry-stick a yard and a half long, at the end of which was a small Turkish bowl resting on a table of immense value, formed of mosaic, and which had been purchased and conveyed to its then resting place at an enormous expense: and in

another part of the room, at full length on a sofa, cigar in mouth, reposes a third guest in the full enjoyment of his aromatic weed, while he calmly admired a hunting piece by Teniers, which hung over one of the fire-places: in the centre of the room, a party of four prepared themselves to try a hand at whist; as an ancient servant of the family entered with a jug of boiling water, and sundry black bottles containing brandy and whisky, as a finale to the festivities which had already been so

copiously enjoyed.

Fatigued by the sports of the day, however, and excited beyond our general custom from the share we had taken in the endeavour to inebriate the host—no very courteous act for his hospitality, by-the-bye, we availed ourselves of the opportunity of escaping to our downy couch, in order to prepare ourselves for a journey on the morrow. Being over-heated and feverish from our libations, however, sleep was out of the question, and at an early hour we sallied forth to take a look at the magnificent scenery by which the castle is on all sides surrounded, as well as to walk along the beautiful terrace which skirts the river Tay.

The fresh breezes of the morning soon revived us, and renewed appetite warned us the hour of breakfast was at hand. With this hope we turned towards the castle, and reached the dining-room, the scene of the previous night's entertainment: not a soul, however, had made his appearance; at length one, and then another entered, like ourselves, anxious to revive themselves with the morning meal. Thus an hour passed; neither our host nor the gallant soldier, however, greeted us; the bell was rung and answered, but the Laird was not up, the keys were under his pillow, and he could not be disturbed.

At length, famished, and anxious to bid adieu, we ventured to his sleeping apartment, when the sight which presented itself was quite sufficient proof that the national beverage had had the desired effect, while no claret would cause him to succumb. If the Laird had suffered in the onslaught, however, he had not suffered without disabling his foe; for stretched on another bed, lay the soldier, booted and even spurred, as on his joining the festive board. We must now draw a veil over a scene which, immeasurably ludicrous to those who witnessed it, we have only referred to in recollection of a day which commenced with sport and pleasure, and terminated in laughter.

Should this meet the eye of those to whom we have alluded, may they take it as it is meant, and give us an opportunity of enjoying their society

again.

CHAPTER XII.

In the afternoon, ere we left the castle, we received some additional information in reference to the deer which had given us the joyous and exciting chase of the previous day; in fact, it was made known to us that the noble animal, having been somewhat too closely pressed by the hounds to make his land tenure agreeable, had plunged into the river Tay at the very spot where we had checked;—a fact subsequently discovered from his foot-marks on the banks, when, doubtless, owing to his great weight and exhaustion, together with the rapid current of the rushing waters, he was unable to stem the current in a direct line, and the flying animal consequently landed several hundred yards below the point on the opposite shore to that where he had taken soil.

This truth was very speedily discovered by the noble Laird, subsequent to his crossing the bridge; for after a few trials along the water side, the scent was recovered, and away they raced again. By this time, however, the "shades of evening" had well nigh closed in darkness o'er the large and extensive woodlands which cover this part of Perthshire; moreover, a most impracticable country to ride over presented itself; obstacles which at once decided the question of leaving the noble stag, for the night, in

peaceful possession of his forest home.

The sun had, however, scarcely topped the horizon,

ere this indefatigable sportsman called once more on the aid of his pets; who, having with little delay recovered their game, made the welkin ring with their melodious voices. Chasing, however, was impossible, from the thickness of the underwood; this, nevertheless, also prevented the deer from putting forth his energies, and unharmed, therefore, he was speedily secured, to fly once more before his

enemies on another day.

After this brief digression, let us now return to our line of march, once more mount on wheels, and make direct for Dalwhinie, the chosen place of halting for the night; towards which well-known spot to most Highland sportsmen, for the last ten miles we sat on the mail-box, in animated converse with one of the most eccentric whips, as far as his style of driving was concerned, as e'er was the doom of a nervous biped to make acquaintance with: now rattling down a narrow, stony, abrupt declivity, without drag or other security—now whirling like mad up what he termed a bit of a brae-then down a regular pitch again, with a whisk literally at right angles, over a narrow bridge—so narrow, indeed, as barely to admit the passing of one carriage, beneath which the foaming torrent, rushing over rocks and stones, formed refreshing pools for trout, yet of sufficient depth to drown any unfortunate victim who might chance to be immersed therein; which sort of immersion actually took place not lang syne, as the abigail of a noble lady now living can youch for. We may, however, as well tell our neighbours, that this subsequently half-drowned damsel sat on the rumble of an English travelling chariot-doubtless gazing afar, in admiration of the wild mountains —when at the very moment of being whirled over one of those right-angled bridges previously named, the post-boy made a bad shot at the centre of the roadway, and the hind wheels consequently coming in rough contact with the projecting stones of the parapet, jerked the young maiden, pink ribbons and all, splash into a trout pool, from which, with great good fortune, but with much difficulty, she was happily recovered—with life, it is true, but with a full determination never to pass that life with a

mistress given to Highland travelling.

With this event fresh in our memory-for it had occurred only the previous summer-our nerves were somewhat unstrung, and scarcely dared we rest our eyes on the wild heathered mountains, now clad with snow, which extended far and wide on all sides. Moreover, so intently was our imagination fixed on the manœuvres of cecher, by whose side we sat, that, if the truth be known, we felt our fingers clutch from time to time a strap or any other safeguard within grasp, as he, with hands widely extended, in each one held a rein, and these so loosely, that it appeared to us utterly impossible that he could do aught to lighten or prevent an accident, should such perchance occur; tenfold the more so, that any nag selected from the team he gloried in would have disgraced a hackney coach, though honoured for the time being by the arduous duty of dragging her Majesty's mail. Not one of these four animals was entirely sound; what the one suffered from the loss of eye or wind, the other equally shared from lameness or broken knees. Time, howeverfor time appears far more precious than humanity to Highland mail contractors-was not allowed for these poor ill-used horses to fall; a rough favour roughly granted: moreover, the only one, we presume, which does perchance save the necks of some hundreds of English sportsmen and tourists who

annually visit the northern capital by this Highland road. During the long summer's day, when the weather, even in its brightest garb, is clear and balmy, this tortuous route is wild, naked, and desolate, and, save that the eye of a sportsman loves to dwell on trout streams and vast moorlands, it presents but few objects of interest, with the exception of those derived from its peculiar barrenness of aspect and total absence of woodland. Fancy it, then—ye gentlemen who sit at home at ease, snugly ensconced in a soft arm chair before a blazing fire—as it then presented itself to us, clothed in Siberian garments, some short time previous to Christmas, and join in our feelings of happiness as we descended from our position of danger on the top of the mail; for though half frozen was our life's blood, they told of nothing but gratitude that we still existed in unmutilated convalescence, to exclaim:

"If this be the road of General Wade,
"Tis the most damnable ever was made."

Nevertheless, thanks to a kind Providence, here we arrived safe and sound at Dalwhinie; not a pretty name but unquestionably a pleasant place, as many can vouch for with much truth as well as ourselves, and, moreover, a first-rate quarter for grouse shooting, for the merit of which assertion we may refer you to the Marquis of Huntly, Captain Barclay of Ury, the late Mr. Purcall, Mr. L. S. M'Kenzie, and a host of other good sportsmen and agreeable gentlemen, though it be, in unadorned description, simply a rambling, rough, stone built, barn-like abode, situated in the centre of a wilderness of wildness. In fact, were it possible, by magic or any other means, to convey a corpulent and well-fed alderman, whose previous existence had been passed

in the full enjoyment of the luxuries of the mighty Babylon—with the rare exception of an occasional trip to revel on the seasonable gastronomic delights of white bait at Blackwall—or perch at the Star and Garter, Richmond—or even to the more distant Brighton, there to inhale, during the afternoon of each summer Saturday, fresh sea breezes for a week's consumption, and luxuriate on the best of soles—were it possible, we say, to put such an amiable gentleman's head in a bag at the very moment he was about to lift a spoonful of luscious turtle to his anxious mouth, and transport him on the carpet of Arabia to the hostelry of Dalwhinie, we question whether dismay or despair, or both, would not cause

him a fit of apoplexy.

Yet Dalwhinie is, as we shall endeavour to illustrate, a pleasant and most important locale in her Majesty's Gaelic dominions; and, if the landlord who now reigns there be the identical individual who, in the time of our wanderings, was wont to provide for the internal requirements of mail passengers, sightseeking tourists, and ardent sportsmen, we can with truth declare that he is a very amiable Boniface, a very good sheep farmer, and, moreover, he can cast a fly, shoot a grouse, and perform many other desirable things as they should be performed. Dalwhinie decidedly does not convey to the mind on first ap-pearance any very peculiar sensations of pleasure or of interest; on the contrary, the extreme loneliness of its position, standing as it does in the very centre of vast heather-covered hills, the only trees visible within the wild expanse of moorland over which the eye wanders being a few stunted firs, which in some measure shelter the tenement, though on the wrong side to protect it from the keen blasts from north and east, as you approach its welcome doors. Never-

theless, as we have already said, it is a most important resting place, as all will readily admit whose pleasure or whose duty may perchance induce their travelling by the Highland road from the fair city of Perth to the ancient capital of the north; or from the banks of the Ness, on whose wide waters Meal Four Vournin casts his dark shadows to the aforenamed city of "Inches:" indeed, with all the desolation and bleakness of position, it is truly a rich pearl in the wilderness, and if not the best road-side hostelry in Scotland-which, after all, would not be saving much in its favour—it is as good as the best. Should you perchance arrive there by the mail, when journeying southwards, about eight in the morning, you will doubtless fully concur in our opinion, while appeasing an appetite derived from a long night's journey through wild hills and over rough roads, in the discussion of some half score of delicious fried trout, fresh from the burn which rushes beneath the window of your breakfast parlour, in addition to an egg or two, warm from the nest of the cacklers in the yard. True, the bread you eat may have been baked some four days previous, but let not that disturb you, for the toast becomes more crisp, and whatever your displeasure it will avail you nought, inasmuch as no baker lives nearer at hand than Dunkeld or Perth on the one side, or Pitmain and Inverness on the other.

The hour of halting at this welcome spot, when travelling towards the north by similar conveyance, was wont to be 5 r.m.; then, for the reasonable outlay of two shillings, you were served, without a moment's delay, with some well-flavoured heather-fed mutton; add to this, if any addition be required, in the season, a hotch-potch, which, at Dalwhinie, requires not the "confidence" of sausages, as at most



Tunkold as approved from Porthe



other Highland inns; fresh trout, and even salmon, poultry, game, and the best of custard puddings—a standing dish for those puddingly inclined. Should you have a weakness for whisky there is none better in the Highlands, if not, ask for ale and "London" porter, which is admirably brewed at St. Andrew's, but in things, if not in persons, there is much in a a name—in both, say we. Sherry we never there attempted, and port does not bear the shaking of Highland roads; therefore, if you can make yourself contented with such international articles of ordinary consumption, can bear the smell of a peat fire, and put up with a tolerable bed, you may do far worse than pass a night at the "Hôtel de la Poste Dalwhinie," which we did much to our satisfaction.

Thus we prepared ourselves, by rest and refreshment at this our starting point, for Corryarrick on the morrow; and this morrow broke bright and cloudless, as we walked forth early to the front of the inn, to look on the cold strange scene which presented itself, as we gazed on the distant rugged and snow clad mountains, over which we had determined

to make our way.

"The morn is up again, the dewy morn,
With breath all incense, and with cheeks all bloom,
Laughing the clouds away with playful scorn,
And living as if earth contained no tomb,
And glowing into day. We may resume
The march of our existence."

A morning such as might be fancied from the above beautiful quotation from "Childe Harold," is that we should suggest as the most desirable for the excursion we were about to commence, yet, like many other persons as wise as ourselves, we have not through life habituated ourselves to follow in the path we have occasionally selected for our friends;

and in this instance we certainly evince no selfishness, when we add, that the whole earth, or, more properly speaking, the whole expanse of snow-for nought else was visible-sparkled and glittered in the sun's rays, and the air intensely keen, but clear and bracing, seemed to invigorate and nerve us for the hazardous undertaking of mounting the steep sides of Corryarrick, at all times no easy route, and now made doubly difficult from the various impediments offered by the snow, and others consequent on the late period of the season. Having determined, however, to enjoy the beauties of nature's wildness in her wintry garb, we had greater inducement for attempting this route, and although many strange tales of danger and difficulty are still told of it, we were by no means deterred. Nevertheless, while we were awaiting the commissariat department, in the way of kippered salmon and sundry grilled chops of heather-fed mutton, in order to prepare us for the line of march, we may tell our readers, that on one occasion a poor woman, who followed in the rear of a detachment who were marching over Corryarrick during the winter, embarrassed and fatigued by the difficulties of the route, and the additional care of an infant which she held in her arms, sat down on the mountain to rest, still keeping sight of the receding troop of soldiers, as they straggled irregularly down the zigzag path towards the valley of the Ness, in which stands the military station of Fort Augustus, whither they were marching. Overcome by fatigue and the inclemency of the weather, she fell asleep, and although, on her being missed, several parties were sent forth from the Fort to seek her, it was not till the following morning she was discovered by a shepherd reclining against a stone, nearly covered with snow. The poor woman was then quite dead,

but the infant at her breast, probably from the affectionate care it had received from a tender mother till the last moment of her existence, was not absolutely lifeless. On being immediately removed to the Fort, every attention which humanity could suggest was tendered to the poor child by the wife of the governor, and the energies of life were at once fully restored to it; not so, however, the use of its limbs, till after weeks of constant care, unremitting kindness, and unwearied attention. Many soldiers were also formerly lost during their march over Corryarrick. But the world now wags apace, and in these days we understand the power of contending even with natural difficulties far better than did our grandpapas. Ladies, and delicate ones too, therefore now ride on horseback half way up the steep sides of Ben Lawers, and many a fair damsel we wot of would be nothing loth to face the more hazardous Corry Zigzag, even during a rough autumnal day, on a thorough bred; and thus may a sportsman presume to attempt it in December.

The pass of Corryarrick is one of the ancient military ways, now termed Parliamentary roads—we surmise from the fact of these ways being more tortuous, more rough, and more difficult to follow, than most other ways, be it highway or byeway. Neither difficulties nor dangers, however, deterred us from attempting it; und having therefore hired a one-horse open car—that is to say, a ramshackly, brokenspringed, four-wheeled carriage—with a trusty gillie as companion, guide, and driver, we bade adieu to the comforts of Dalwhinie, and started on our expedition at an early hour, being determined to make as rapid progress as possible till the road would no longer admit of our travelling on wheels. Arrived at this point, we halted at a rude sort of

sheilling, half stone, half turf, in the neighbourhood of which we were enabled to secure three strong Highland ponies, on one of which we strapped our light baggage, and with the aid of the others and our legs we prepared to approach the Zig-zag; not, however, till we had obtained some information as to the practicability of the route, while we sat warming ourselves by a peat fire, the smoke from which, now struggling through the thatched roof, now filling the low room with its density, half stifled us. Nevertheless, warmed, refreshed, and amused by this brief delay, we renewed our onward path-the gillie in advance, with the cavalry and baggage; while we, having loaded our guns, prepared ourselves in the hope of securing a brace of grouse or a duck or two, of which there are abundance on the banks of the Spey. And thus we walked cheerfully up the acclivity which led to the far more abrupt ascent of the mountain; while our preparations for sport proved so far successful, that we managed to kill a white hare, a brace of grouse, and a wild duck-no bad commencement for our Christmas pie; for which depredation we beg to offer our apologies to Cluny M'Pherson, to whom, we imagine, they justly belonged. From all we have heard, however, of that Highland laird, we feel satisfied, that so far from creating his anger, he would have permitted a double slaughter for so laudable an undertaking; and we shall not forget to toast him in a bumper, the moment we have secured the wherewith.

At length, arrived at the foot of the Zigzag, we looked with astonishment, if not awe and admiration, on the rugged sides of Corryarrick; still more so, when informed that the strange and precipitous staircase, of a mile and a half in length, we were about to climb, would entail on us another descent—

though a less steep and less rough one—of nine miles, ere tree or shrub, or track or trace of human habitation, would again greet us. Such a route, therefore, at all periods, all seasons, and during all weathers, cannot fail to strike the heart with feelings of desolation; but how much stronger must be these sensations when that desolation is clothed in the garb of winter! Yet as the sun still shone on the white expanse of snow, and sparkled on each mountain top, we could not resist recurring to a fact we had once heard related, in reference to the wild pass we were about to enter.

CHAPTER XIII.

IF memory does not fail us, it was in the year 1746 that a detachment of the 24th regiment were marching, one brilliant day in summer-time, from Fort Augustus over Corryarrick, en route to the south, when the officer in command, doubtless a lover of such wild and beautiful scenery, ordered his men to march down the Zigzag in single file, directing, at the same time, that the baggage and women should bring up the rear on horseback. Such an appearance, in such a desert, must doubtless have formed a picture of no common interest; and many an artist would have gloried thus to have witnessed the brilliant sunshine glittering on the arms of this little warlike host, whose military costume, contrasting with the dark and rugged mountains, through which, in a living mile of zigzag, they defiled, must have added greatly to the scene. It would have pleased us well had we met with such a sight, not a living being, however, or a living thing, save here and there a croaking raven, greeted our footsteps, as we toiled up the hard and snowy frozen mountain side. But we must dwell more briefly on such scenes, however interesting, for they are within the reach of all who visit the Highlands, and this number has now become legion.

At length, however, we attained the wished for summit, on which extends a small plain, probably the third of a mile in circumference; and there, on that spot, we once more halted, in order to select the most favourable position for enjoying the extensive view, which had been the principal object that induced us to undertake so rough an excursion at so unseasonable a period of the year. With this intent, having mounted on a neighbouring rock, we cast a rapid glance on all sides; a glance, however, sufficient to recall the following beautiful sentiment—" I live not in myself, but I become portion of that around me."

"And to me,
High mountains are a feeling, but the hum
Of human cities' torture:
I can see nothing to loath in nature."

CHILDE HAROLD.

It had previously been our good fortune, during many seasons, both in summer's warmth and sunshine, and during winter's frost and gloom, to visit many a mountain path, and stand on many a mountain summit. O'er the Simplon we have travelled when the green leaf hung thick on the woodland valley; the Mount Cenis we have crossed in wintry desolation; the Pyrenees, the Alps, the Morean Mountains, and Etna's smoking pinnacle, we have seen; and many another rocky mountain have we wandered over. Yet with all the resplendent beauty of many, and all the varied interests of others—to many, indeed most of which, Corryarrick can only be compared as a hill, yet it nevertheless surpasses all in peculiarity of feature, and curiosity of prospect attained therefrom.

From its grassy summit—for sheep might be, and are, we believe, there fed—no distant lakes or majestic rivers, no leafy glens, no rich vales, no lifethronged towns or even hamlets, rich woodlands or sheltered cots, appear; but one boundless expanse or

rough ocean of mountains and hills, whose tops seem to wave one beyond the other to the distant sea in the west, as on every other side as far as the eye can reach, to the marked outline of the horizon. In fact, nothing but the eye of life can convey to the mind any adequate idea of that snow-clad scene as we then beheld it, and which so entirely repaid us for our unseasonable, or some may add, fool-hardy excursion -the sensations inspired from which it would be impossible clearly to explain. The homeward flight of the ravens, however, if home they possess, together with the intensity of the cold, told us we had sufficiently for the nonce admired this wilderness of snowy mountains; therefore, having fired a distant shot without effect at one of these black wanderers, in order to break the desolation of stillness which reigned on all sides, we descended from our rocky eminence and hastened to overtake the gillie with his ponies, in order to ride down the long and interesting descent towards Laga-ne-viene. If the ascent of Corryarrick by the zigzag route approached from Dalwhinie is rugged, precipitous, and interesting from its very wildness and desolation; the less abrupt, but far longer ascent towards Laga-ne-viene or the Hollow of Milk, as it is termed—at which point, when travelling from Fort Augustus, the base of Corryarrick commences-offers no less abundance of picturesque beauty. All, however, is wild mountain and barren heathered hill, till you cross the river Tarff, when the hanging woods and rocky bed of the stream form a delightful relief from the interminable hills over which you have hitherto passed; and yet these hills, bleak as they are from situation as from appearance, afford admirable pasture for sheep, and formerly abundant black cattle ranged over their extensive sides.

As the evening approached, however, we at length quitted the rugged hill, and, with little regret, beheld some signs of human habitation. During our descent, we had added another mountain hare to our meagrely filled game bag: this kept up the excitement. As the wintry evening closed, however, the sky became overcast; and the brilliant sun, which hitherto had so kindly favoured our footsteps, gave way to gloom and dreariness, with every appearance of a fall: human nature also began to cry peccavi, as excitement gave way to fatigue; and in truth, our day's march had been one of no usual nature, either for mind or body. With no little delight, therefore, did we hail the curling smoke which issued from the roof of each cottage, which even in their primitive and humble appearance, if not of cleanliness—a rare virtue in such parts-told at least of warmth and shelter from the rude wintry blast, and caused us to increase our lagging and weary efforts to receive the welcome we knew we might expect when we reached the quarters of the amiable and hospitable commandant of Fort Augustus. The night had nevertheless closed in darkness ere we crossed the drawbridge by which the Fort is entered: and never was sportsman or tourist who felt half the gratification we did when relieved from our rough walking costume: warm and refreshed, we took our place at the well-covered board of smoking dainties, of which we were so kindly made to share. The dinner over, shutters and curtains closed, we drew our chairs around the blazing fire, composed of turf and sparkling fir logs; and having mixed a smoking tumbler just to keep the cold claret in order, and lighted our cigars, many a Highland tale of lang syne was told, and many an anecdote as exciting as the punch. Absent friends were toasted, and scenes in our own dear England dwelt on till the hour of midnight, and increasing fatigue told us that it was time to rest; and ere another hour passed, we slept soundly in a comfortable apartment within the precincts of that Fort, where in days of yore the military watch had paced his lonely rounds, and many a military carouse had closed the hours of day in the very room we had

been so kindly greeted.

The December morning broke heavily, and all was leaden dulness as we threw aside the shutters of our sleeping-room, and looked out from the windows of the Fort on the strange, wild, and wintry scene which presented itself-a scene from which the mind gathers fresh interest, in the knowledge of its being one of which history has many a tale to tell; for there, amid those rugged mountains, had wandered an unhappy Prince, after the battle of Culloden, hunted like a beast of prey from glen to glen, yet not less welcome to the hearts and hearths of his misguided but faithful followers; and scarcely a neighbouring hill presents itself, but could tell some sad tale of sorrow and rebellion. Once more we looked on the wide waters of the Ness, whose glassy stillness and dark-looking surface contrasted strangely with the bright and sparkling picture which we had dwelt on the previous summer, when we had rowed along its woody banks on our way to Invermoriston, whose hospitable domain we were about once more to enter, previous to visiting the northern capital, where we shall halt but briefly.

Meal Four Vournin's towering pinnacle, now deeply clad in snowy garb, still held aloft his hoary head, as if in pride of place he stood a steel clad sentinel over the dark pine, oak forests, and scattered hamlets, whose curling smoke rose here and there through the still and dark solemnity of the valley.

The same noble deer-hound, still, heedless of the inclemency of the season, lay stretched on the frozen lawn, rising but slowly, as we drove up to the castledoor, to welcome visitors, which, with a glance, this extraordinary animal's instinct was satisfied were no intruders. As usual, the kind-hearted and hospitable Laird greeted us with the warmly given hand of welcome; and had we been enabled to accept his generous offers that we should remain a few days in glen, those days might probably have been swelled into months, ere we should have been considered as intruders. Time, however, awaits the pleasure of no man; add to which the dark and lowering sky gave strong evidence of a coming snow storm of no gentle order; and notwithstanding our anticipations and desires for such a down-falling, we by no means rejoiced at the probability of such being realized so as to necessitate our detention as a witness of its furies in a Highland glen. While we halt, however, to shake hands with the good Laird of Glenmoriston, and take advantage of his local knowledge, in order to make practical our wishes of crossing the Ness near the fall of Foyers, for the purpose of proceeding thence by the southern bank to Inverness, we will beg leave to lay before our sporting friends some further interesting details in reference to that portion of the Highlands where stands his ancient abode, amid its surrounding extent of sporting quarters; but more particularly with regard to those his more immediate property - details which we humbly flatter ourselves will be eagerly perused by a large portion of those who annually visit the moors during the grousing season. With this hope, we shall proceed to name the several quarters now let by Glenmoriston, i. e. Mr. Grant,—together with a rough calculation of the game killed thereon during the last season, the very naming of which amount causes a sort of sporting palpitation about the regions of the heart.

The most extensive of these quarters is that of Dundregan, in Glenmoriston, tenanted by Sir H. Meux. On this most desirable ground there is a very comfortable residence, affording ample accommodation, and ample sport for four guns; which may be readily conceived, when we state that the moors over which the shootings range, may be esti-

mated at fifty thousand acres.

Sir Henry, from all accounts, for we have not the pleasure of his acquaintance, is an amiable man, and a first-rate sportsman. In proof of which observation, we may state, that he is highly popular among the inhabitants of the glen, of whose comfort he is not unmindful while following his own pleasures—conduct, which all who imitate, will find to their advantage. And by a careful, but not selfish, preservation of his game, it is yearly found on the increase.

The amount of game killed at this quarter during the last season, as far as we have been enabled to ascertain, was not less than one thousand brace of grouse, in addition, to a very large amount of black game and ptarmigan, with the glorious addition of seven or eight red deer.

Forsooth, a sportsman's mouth may well water at such delicate provision for his pastime. For ourselves, had we such a chance, we should scarcely close an eyelid from the 1st, till the 12th of August had caused bodily strength to give way to mental

excitement.

Knocky is another admirable quarter on Glenmoriston's estate. These moors are, however, divided from the land on which the castle stands by the waters of Loch Ness; vet immediately opposite to it, on the southern side of the lake. This shooting is now let to Mr. Perry, but will be occupied, we understand, during the present season, by Lord Guernsey and his friends. Its range is of much smaller extent that that of Dundregan, and may be estimated at about fifteen thousand acres, but in many respects it is equally desirable. The house is well situated, and has good accommodation for a party of four; moreover, it is a suitable and pleasant residence during the autumnal months, for ladiesalways, in our opinion, not only most welcome, but a charming addition to the delights of a shooting excursion, as in all other places and at all other times.

The game on the Knocky moors consists exclusively of grouse and black game, both of which are, nevertheless, so abundant as to have admitted of a thinning of seven hundred brace last year. Mr. Grant is also the proprietor of the well known beautiful estate of Foyers; the romantic charms of which have, however, been so frequently dwelt on by abler pens than ours-and, moreover, it is a spot so well known to Highland tourists, that it scarcely needs comment here. As a shooting quarter, nevertheless, it offers numerous advantages, with which few others in Scotland can attempt to vie. The house, though old, as is the furniture it contains, cannot be classed with the usual residences generally found on the hills, (and which, save by the gamekeeper or gillie left in charge, are rarely occupied except during the shooting season,) inasmuch as it has been tenanted as a constant family residence, the head of which might enjoy his mornings on the surrounding moors, while his loved ones, surrounded with magnificent

scenery, would find their Highland home both

interesting and agreeable.

To this residence, which, embosomed in trees, stands close on the borders of the lake, there is attached a good garden; and moreover, the steamer which plies almost daily from Glasgow to Inverness, and vice versā, presents a means not only of reaching this beautiful spot from England or elsewhere with facility and little expense, but is also a most desirable carrier for the wants of human nature and human pastime, which otherwise could not be obtained in the glen.

This desirable quarter is now held by Mr. Majoribanks; so "coute qui coute," however long the rent may run, there is little fear of a "cheque." The extent of the estate, let with Foyers, may be estimated at twenty thousand acres: and though we are not precisely aware what may be the annual amount of game killed thereon, yet, calculating roughly, we should say five hundred brace of grouse is under the mark. There are also abundance of black game, as also red-deer and roe-deer: owing however to this shooting having hitherto constantly changed its tenants, the game has had little rest or preservation.

Glenmoriston has also another agreeable small shooting quarter, adjacent to Foyers, on the southern side of the Ness, let at a very inconsiderable rent to Lord Lovat; but this has always formed a portion of

his well known shooting of Killin.

In addition to all these pearls in the wilderness, he holds for his own sport a good extent of ground in the immediate neighbourhood of the castle, which runs up the beautiful glen of Moriston for about seven miles, and offers ample sport to himself and friends. The amount generally killed thereon, has averaged about five hundred brace of grouse; and as the birds are now spreading over a large portion of the hill, where hitherto few were found, they will greatly increase. But the pride of the place is the deer forest, which extends along four miles of woodland, enclosing five thousand acres, and joins with a deer forest of Lord Lovat's, in both of which a

glorious tale of venison may be yearly told.

Sir H. Meux, the tenant of Dundregan, has this year, we are informed, taken the sheep from a portion of his ground and laid it under deer. It will naturally take some years to stock it, but in three he will find sport. And thus will this, one of the most noble of noble sports, ere long merit for its motto, "Aucto splendore resurgam," in a glen, where nature has been so bountiful in beauty, and princes have been welcomed by its inhabitants, who have proved alike their honour as their faith, by succouring an unhappy fugitive amid its wilds, in spite of golden offers which even the cravings of hunger could not tempt.

CHAPTER XIV.

But we must wander on, or be buried in the snow. We preferred the former; and with this intent we secured a vehicle similar to that provided by the lassie at Inverouran—that is, a cart, to convey our baggage to the spot where we crossed to Foyers, and took a hasty look at the waterfall, which, truly beautiful as it is in summer sunshine, is scarcely less interesting when the pendant icicles hang in myriads on its rocky sides. On these beauties, however, we must not dwell. Solemn, grand, and gloomy as they were, bedecked in Christmas garb, yet we may truly say,—

"To climb the trackless mountain all unseen, With the wild flock, that never needs a fold; Alone o'er steeps and foaming falls to lean: This is not solitude; 'tis but to hold Converse with nature's charms, and view her stores unrolled."

The short winter's day, however, gave us little time for loitering by the way. And, as it was, dark night had well nigh hidden the surrounding scene ere we found ourselves snugly seated before a blazing fire, at the Union Hotel at Inverness, where we purposed to make one day's halt, and then to steer our course southward. Due time, good neighbours, was it not? for the new year was already near at hand, and the keen winds of the north country had already

well nigh blown through and through us. In fact, we began seriously to consider that wandering, sporting, and sight-seeing in the Highlands was a very agreeable mode of passing the autumnal months, but rather an unruly taste in winter; so we must refer our readers to others, should they require

any prolific detail of Inverness.

This much, however, we can say, and say truly; the situation of this ancient capital of the north, if not interesting, pleasing, or beautiful when the snow is on the mountain-top, nevertheless lies snug in peace and shelter; and when the bright sun of summer sparkles on the Ness, it must be a pleasant pastime to stand on the bridge which crosses that river from east to west, and watch the silvery fish

which gambol in its waters.

We stood on this bridge, even on the bleak day of our sojourn there, and were casting, not a fly, but an eye around us, when it fell on a sort of iron grating, or trap-door, in the centre of the carriage-way. Curious to ascertain the utility of such a dungeon, we accosted a Highlander, passing at the time, for information, and were not a little suprised at the prompt and courteous answer we received. sir," said he, "was the ancient prison of the town: many a felon was there confined, not half a century since. As you will observe, there was no escaping below save into the Ness, or above without discovery. between which and drowning there was but the choice. On one occasion, however, when the jailor proceeded to supply a thief confined there with his morning's meal, he discovered that the rats had taken time by the forelock, and made a meal of his person during the night. The law was not pleased with such interference on their parts, consequently the place was abandoned as

prison, and remains, as you see, only as a subject of

curiosity."

"Very curious, indeed, and very disgusting," said we, thanking him for his tale; which, if true—and we have since heard it repeated—reflects no great credit on the humanity of those who could be guilty of consigning a fellow-man to such a fate; but since the days of Cromwell they have prided themselves on the purity of their English pronunciation, if not on the purity of their actions. And with these feelings we returned to the hotel, of which there are two for selection at Inverness, large enough and good enough to satisfy all who are not very magnificent and fastidious in their requirements; the choice we must leave to those who travel so far north.

In winter, Inverness is as dull a place, we surmise, as may be; but during the four months of the sporting season, it wears a garb of cheerfulness and prosperity, with which few towns in the north can vie. Steamers from London, coaches from Perth, and steamers from Glasgow,—which ply vid Loch Ness, and pass through, and near to, some of the finest scenery in Scotland,—bring shoals of visitors and sportsmen; and, in fact, what, generally speaking, is a dull Highland town, then becomes a lively place of pleasure. But we must be off, for thicker and darker are the clouds which hang over the summits of Meal Four Vournin.

The starting hour of Her Majesty's mail from Inverness is, or rather was at the period to which we refer, 2 A.M.—of all hours probably the most inconvenient and most objectionable to those who purpose travelling thereby. Should you retire early, for a few hours rest previous to your departure, at the very moment that you sink into a sound nap, the

horn of the guard apprises you of that which the waiter, notwithstanding the strict injunctions he has received to arouse you in good time, of course, has omitted; thus leaving you only a few minutes for slipping on your breeks and taking your seat; whereas, should you endeavour, by snoozing on a sofa, to prepare for your journey, you arise feverish and fatigued before that journey has actually commenced. Nevertheless, such was our doom, and this not on a bright moonlight morning in Midsummer, but on a dark, dense, lowering morning of Christmas time, with the snow already a foot deep on the ground, and then falling so fast, as to leave scarcely a doubt that the Highland road would be well nigh

impassable ere mid-day.

We have already alluded to our anxiety to proceed to the south, together with our anticipated hope of witnessing a Highland snow-storm—a hope which was about to be realized, somewhat more roughly, however, than we had bargained for. Yet, notwithstanding all the horrors depicted to us by the worthy landlord of the Union, should the probable event arrive of our being detained for a month in some rude wayside shielling with nothing to eat but oatmeal, and little to drink but whisky-with the further possibility of being dug out, half dead, from a snow-drift-having formed our plans, we were determined to put them into practice; and having, therefore, bid adieu to our amiable companion over Corryarrick, who was about to proceed to Aberdeen, well and warmly clad, we took our seat in the mail. The horn of the guard apprised the waking Invernessians that their hopes, fears, and wishes, sentimental and commercial, were safe in the letter-bag, and away we startedthe very necessary addition of a pair of leaders having been made to the four ill-conditioned nags which formed our team.

Without the coach there was not a passenger, and within, save ourselves, but one, whom we very soon ascertained to be a commercial individual-or, probably we ought to say, commercial gentleman—who would doubtless have preferred his ease at his inn, if duty had not made it indispensably necessary that he should make an attempt to get forward to Glasgow; and doubtless, having satisfied his mind on this point, he slunk into the corner of the vehicle, with the full intention of sleeping, as much as possible, throughout the journey-in which determination, however, he was doomed to be wofully disappointed. Our party, therefore, if not a pleasant one, was a small one, consisting of coachy, guard, post-boy, bagsman, and our wandering self.

For a few miles we travelled on snug enough, but a peep from the window told us all was white without, and the snow fell faster and thicker; thus we continued till we had performed probably two-thirds of the first stage, when a tremenduous bump, and then a lurch, roused us from a slight doze; or rather the ejection from our friend in the opposite corner into our lap, convinced us something was wrong. In order to satisfy ourselves of this fact, however, we let down the window sash, when, true enough, there we were, fast in a snow-drift, in the very centre of a vast and wild looking moorland; the moon, notwithstanding the fast falling snow, however, still gave ample light clearly to enable us to distinguish all objects around, as well as the more distant mountains. And thus our curiosity had very speedily been gratified, for here, in truth, was a picture which surpassed all we had hitherto beheld on canvass.

Naturally enough, we jumped out of the coach,

knee deep in snow, to assist the guard and post-boy, who were already hard at work, endeavouring to clear the way—spades, &c., being always carried by the Highland mail guards during the winter; and at length, by the aid of six horses, we were once more fairly en route.

During the whole of this time, however, the "commercial gentleman" dozed snugly in the interior; which convinced us of one fact, that he must have

been a dealer in grocery.

Having so far effected our escape from the moor, we made tolerable progress for about two miles farther, and were in great hopes of reaching the first place of changing without further interruption. Such, however, was not to be; for within sight of the welcome haven we once more sank deeply in a snow-drift of far greater depth than the former one. Snap went the traces of the leaders, and down went the horse on which the post boy rode, almost burying the lad, as well as himself, in the snow. The wind had risen considerably, and the snow flakes fell larger, faster, and more dense. Oh! what a hideous night it was! there we were, truly, in a snow storm, and that of no common order. What was to be done? We really began to think we had acted a mad part. To move the carriage was impossible, and to reach the shelter of the inn almost as impracticable. At first, it was proposed that the whole party should take refuge in the inside,* and quietly await the break of day: to this, however, the guard made objections, and just ones. He was desirous, if possible,

^{*} A case of this nature actually occurred, as early as the 29th of October, 1842, in Scotland; when with several others we sat in the mail four hours awaiting the break of day, in order to recover the line of road, which from the density of the snow-storm we had lost.

to get forward with the mail-bags on horseback; and was equally aware that, if the storm continued another half-hour, it would prevent the possibility of moving the coach either forwards or backwards. His advice was therefore listened to—viz., that the coachman should make his way back to Inverness, while he, strapping the mail-bags on one of the leaders, would endeavour to reach the first stage on the other.

On our parts, however, this arrangement was by no means satisfactory: we had not the most remote desire of being snowed up for a month at Inverness, and still less of retracing our steps, even for a league, in company with the immovable bagsman, who had not even been disturbed by our second fixation in the drift, and who, for ought we know to the contrary, still sleeps in the mail. Consequently, with a little persuasion, we at length prevailed on the guard to accept our companionship, and forthwith mounted on the horse which carried the mail-bags.

We thus started for the little hostelry of Moy, which, after various struggles, both of horse and man, we at length reached in safety, leaving the remainder of the party to return from whence they

came.

Having arrived so far, however, we were determined neither to succumb to persuasion, nor fear of the dangers hinted at, should we continue our route during the night. The guard was determined, with a praiseworthy zeal, to proceed with the mail-bags if practicable. And if in his intention he could succeed, why should not another, with such arguments strengthened by the addition of a little siller? We at length obtained a horse, on the back of which was strapped our share of the bags; and having wrapped ourselves snugly in as many outward garments as it

was possible to move in, we obtained a couple of guides, and once more started towards the south, our next point of halting being the bridge of Car.

It would be as uninteresting to our readers, however, as tedious to ourselves, were we to dwell from stage to stage of that most hazardous and exhausting journey, which we nevertheless performed in safety, having ridden through actual ravines, and over mountains of snow and wilderness, on every variety of cattle, from the eart-horse to the broken-down thoroughbred, a distance of seventy-two miles to Dalnarcardock; and this during one of the most severe snow-storms which had been known for years in Scotland, beating directly in our faces for the greater

portion of the night.

On quitting Moy, what with the continued fury of the snow, and utter impossibility of finding the road across the vast moors, our difficulties greatly increased; and various were the rolls in the snow, in which the whole party shared. After riding for several hours, however, we at length reached Aviemore, at which snug little hostelry we obtained some hot and refreshing tea. On starting again from thence, we were happily greeted by a change of weather: the storm gradually relaxed in fury-the mist cleared from the mountain-tops-and the bright and frosty sun broke in brilliancy o'er the snowcovered landscape. The effect was truly exhilarating, after the difficulties and dangers we had experienced during the night; which may be conceived when we add, that the snow in many places where it had drifted was higher than the animals we rode, and in all others at least two feet in depth.

But now we could see clearly. Moreover, the road became more decided in its demarkation, so that we advanced with renewed courage—the intense

pain of the bones of the face, and an occasional somerset, being all we had to complain of, till once more we came in sight of the "Hôtel de la Poste Dalwhinie," about two hours after mid-day. Thus we had already been twelve hours exposed in rambling through the mountains.

At Dalwhinie we found a large party crowding round the smoky peat fires, who had arrived so far by mail from the south; but their vehicle having being left half buried in a drift, several miles on the road, they had walked through the snow to Dalwhinie, where there was every chance of their remaining a fortnight, without they ventured on horseback, as we had done—for which few seemed inclined.

At Dalwhinie having procured a good basin of hot broth, we again mounted fresh nags, and leaving the party to amuse one another, we rode forward to Dalnarcardock, at which place we found the road so much improved, and so comparatively free from snow, that having obtained a post-chaise, in which the four animals prepared for the mail were harnessed, we got snugly into the interior, with the comfort of lighted cigars to prevent rheumatism. And thus we travelled the remaining distance to Perth, at which city we arrived about two hours after midnight.

Thus we had been twenty-four hours in performing a distance of 117 miles: and this, considering the intensity of the cold, the violence of the storm, and the variety of difficulties we had to contend with, was by many considered no easy task. At all events, we had accomplished our desires: we had crossed Corryarrick when snow clad, and witnessed a snow-storm when travelling over the highest and wildest route in the Highlands. We can never regret the

former; indeed we suggest to many to do the same. Of the latter, we can only add,—that while we were certainly not disappointed with the severity of the storm, and can most fully credit the numberless deaths and accidents which arise therefrom in the Highlands, yet it was the first and will be the last we shall willingly encounter. The excitement and absolute necessity of action while on our journey had caused us, for the time being, to think little of the aches and pains which the exposure to the air would cause us to endure on entering a heated room. However, the effect was instantaneous; physical powers forced to their utmost extent, gave way; and for weeks we scarcely recovered the effects of our winter excursion.

During our ride over the hills, we not only saw abundant grouse, but whirled by one of the fiercest gusts of the storm, a bird was actually driven against the horse ridden by the mail guard; which we secured, and which is added to our store of stuffed birds, in memory of the past.

CHAPTER XV.

In addition to many we have already named, there are a variety of most interesting and desirable sporting quarters that may be visited without difficulty throughout the Highlands of Scotland, which afford alike, beauty sufficient to attract the lover of fine wild moorland scenery, and far more than interest to him who, while he wanders on mountain and through glen in search of nature's multiplicity of charms, hears with the ear of a sportsman the chirping of the grouse, which rise ever and anon from the flowery heather through which he treads knee-deep; and looks afar, by the aid of his glass, at a hundred antlers which roam the hill tops: indeed, nothing can exceed the exhilarating effects which thrill through the heart of a man, far more so of a sportsman, who during the autumnal months visits the Highlands, even as we have already said, though he only look with longing eye, and dare not shoot. The abundant bright rushing torrents from the mountains; the salmon rivers, and salmon pools; the rippling trout streams: the scattered coverts which harbour the graceful roe-deer, and the deep historical interest of the Highlands, which carry back the mind in a thousand sources of excitement obtainable in few other spots in Europe.

Among these sporting quarters, we should not forget to name that of Ardverykie, which borders

Loch Laggan, extending far towards the south, over mountain and heathered hill, for many thousand acres. There, on those vast hills, may be found every species of Highland game in abundance, to say last, but certainly not least, that each year the red-deer in the forest become more numerous, till we may live to see the herds which originally, undisturbed, ranged over these vast territories in thousands, attain their former number and size. At a convenient, we may say, beautifully chosen spot on this shooting, within gunshot of the wide waters of Loch Laggan, stands the Highland shooting quarter, or what may be more properly termed the Highland autumnal sporting residence, of the Marquis of Abercorn; and there, indeed, is an example of the effect of wealth! for what was, probably, in days lang syne, the sheilling of some lawless wanderer in the mountains, who lived on the produce of the chase afforded him in wild expanse of forest and of moor-and whose larder was ever well stocked with the salted venison haunch of the red-deer, as with the kippered salmon and dark trout from the lake hard by, with an occasional side of mutton, by way of variety, from the neighbouring farmer's flock; and thence became the residence of some northern sheep farmer,-is now a comparative palace in the wilderness, the windows of which, glittering in the rays of the sinking sun, shew the shadows of their number in the calm and glassy surface of the Laggan. Could but the forefathers of some of the present Lairds, who rejoice in the increased revenues which the love of sport draws from English pockets to doubly line their purses, rise from the dead, and cast but one glance in this mirror of Laggan, great would be their consternation, doubtless, as they witnessed the sight of many and many chimney tops reflecting therein; the smoke from which, smelling not of peat, floats away in the clear air of the mountain, and is caused by many a coal fire or heated stove, over which a French gastronomic artist watches in cap and apron: now tasting the soup, à la grouse, now inspecting the cotelette de saumon or truite à l'huile, to say nothing of the venison—yes, the true mountain-fed, high-flavoured, glorious venison haunch, which slowly

turns before a well-ranged grate.

But far greater would be the extent of their amazement, even to the standing of their hair on end, could they select their own time to make their bow once more on the wilderness, from which the hand of death had caused them for ever to bid farewell, and appear the coming August; for if our information be not incorrect, ere these pages have passed through the hands of the printer, the British royal standard will float in mid air, in the centre of that glen where heretofore none but a rebellious pennon has ere been unfurled. There, in that wild scene, where, save in the memory of the present century, the footstep of the gentle, scarcely of civilization, was never wont to roam, the proudest nobles of the land now meet in sportsman's garb, and revel in the delights of sports and pastime, free from the turmoil of a London season, far from London's splendid parks, but amid nature's far more splendid scenery; and England's proudest, fairest, and most high-bred dames, surrounded with the noblest children of the land we live in, now watch the gambols of their loved ones, 'mid the blooming and sweet-scented heather; and deign not to turn away, when told of many a feat with the gun and the rod. And if such as these find joy in so wild a dwelling place, and by word and action of kindness have found favour in the hearts of many a rude Highlander, how will the notes of pibroch swell from hill to hill for the gathering of clans to welcome their youthful and much loved Sovereign, who thus, without guard or ceremony, in company of him to her the first and dearest on earth, loves to visit their wild mountains, that she may share in his sport and pleasures, and visit scenes where hitherto no sovereign of England has deigned or dared to venture. "Tis strange indeed that these wild glens should e'er be visited by a crowned head, and that the sovereign of Europe's proudest kingdom.

But of this shooting quarter-for shooting quarter ostensibly it is, though, forsooth, it has of late become a commodious mountain dwelling near a lake (not such, perchance, as may be gazed on by the bright waters of Maggiore or Como; nevertheless, truly a palace in comparison to its wont) washed by the waters of Loch Laggan, and not lang syne, almost unapproachable by any vehicle glorying in the possession of springs; but now a royal carriage and royal retinue will doubtless pass from Fort William, a distance of about thirty miles. For the benefit of the tourist, or those who may hereafter be disposed to visit that portion of the Highlands-which unquestionably will be looked on with a greater degree of interest than usual, from the fact of its being the Queen of England's chosen route-we may state, that the boats which daily ply during the summer months from Liverpool to Glasgow, are first-rate as regards their accommodation, rapid in their transit, and the charge made for the passage, as well as for all necessary comforts on board, reasonable. Should the object of a sportsman or a tourist be the West Highlands, or even Inverness, let him disembark at Greenock or Port Glasgow, from whence he will find other boats, whose course enables the passenger to enjoy some of the most magnificent scenery in the

Highlands of Scotland; and will be, we presume, almost precisely the line of country more particularly selected for her Majesty's and her Royal Consort's

progress and pleasure.

Passing through the Kyles of Bute, these small but commodious steam boats, termed the Highland Boats, gain the western end of Loch Tyne at Loch Gilphead: from thence the passengers are conveyed a distance of nine miles through an interesting line of country; the greater portion of which is the property of Mr. Malcolm, a good sportsman and a hospital Laird-by numerous and convenient boats drawn by horses at a rapid rate, at the termination of which a steamer is found, with steam up, ready to convey all travellers to Oban, and thence to Fort William. If the weather be fine, nothing can be more interesting, few parts of Europe more beautiful, than the mountain scenery of Argyleshire, which here presents itself; and the distant view of the many islands which rise as from the sea, clear and rugged in the distance, are in themselves a sufficient sight to repay the lover of nature, if no other objects of interest should present themselves. At Fort William there is a very tolerable inn; and to those who are hardy enough to undertake the ascent of the lofty Ben Nevis, generally we imagined to be the highest mountain in Britain, though in regard to this assertion we are by no means satisfied, as we surmise that Invernesshire contains a rocky mount. whose rugged pinnacle can lay claim to nearer acacquaintance with the clouds. On this point, however, we will not here dwell; but proceed to urge those who have physical powers and taste, as we have had, for such excursions, to attempt the ascent of Nevis's lofty sides; which are by no means diffi-cult of ascent when approached by a ridge towards

the west, about a quarter of a mile up the river Nevis. The view which then presents itself for the first five or six hundred yards, is entirely confined to Glennevis, and the grassy surface of the slopes offer admirable pasture for sheep-feeding: indeed, this spot, far distant from the turmoils and cares of busy life, is celebrated for some of the best mutton and whisky procurable in the Highlands. Of the former we may speak with confidence, having had many a practical gastronomic proof of its excellence; and of the latter, though no lover of the mountain dew, we may nevertheless venture, with full faith in its high flavour, to recommend it to those who have no objection to a Highland dram, or who desire to talk over their morning's ramble in companionship with a soothing glass of hot toddy.

But let us walk on: for each yard we ascend higher and higher, brighter and more beautiful is the picture which nature presents; diversified by bushes, shrubs, and silvery birch woods, the abiding places of the graceful roe-deer, and the raven-coloured blackcock, with many a verdant spot to form a foreground; while below you, in the distance, the smoke of rural hamlets, encircled by young plantations; a river rushing at the bottom of the vale, over many a rock and stone, glides away in a clear stream, and, meandering through wood and vale, loses itself in the sea at Fort William; while, to heighten the delight of this charming view, the sea and distant shores present themselves as a background, formed by many a blue and rugged mountain. It is indeed a scene which expands the heart of one alive to the

charms of nature.

But walk on further, till the prospect opens to the south-west, and you will behold the straights of Correen, the islands of Shuna and Lismore, and the south-east part of Mull, together with the islands of Suecl and Kerrara, on the opposite coast of Argyle; and here two elevated hills appear in the far distance, which declare themselves to be the Paps of Jura; while, turning to the west, you see the small Isles of Rum and Canna, and the sound which separates them from Skye. Beyond all these, if not already sufficient to repay your fatigue, you have the Cullin hills, which form the west of Skye itself, and many parts of Lochiel, a name endeared to all who love the courteous and the brave; and who that does not recollect the beautiful lines of Byron—

"And wild and high the Camerons' gathering rose!
The war note of Lochiel, which Alpyn's hills have heard."

As higher and higher the pedestrian mounts, the path, though by no means difficult, still changes in its nature, till Ben, as if in anger that the stranger should invade his territory, presents all at once the brink of a precipice on his northern barriers, which

is almost perpendicular.

The wanderer may be gratified, but is nevertheless astonished, at the sudden appearance of this precipice, the bosom of which is as cold as an eternal snow can make it; at least on the 8th of the month of August we still found it, where the sun's rays aided not the atmospheric heat in its demolition. Here, looking to the east, Loch Laggan appears, on whose glassy surface our sovereign Queen may, ere a month elapse, be pleased to venture, as she did on the waters of Loch Tay, where many a light bark and many-coloured pennon, floating in the light breezes, was seen by the multitude from neighbouring heights, as her little regal flotilla, with echoing oar, was swiftly propelled along its centre. And, to the south-east, Loch Rannoch, in Perthshire, lies placidly

in the distance; and, if you be accompanied by one who is well acquainted with the country, you need travel no further, for with a clear day and a bright sky, advantages rarely attainable in mountain scenery, you have before you Cruachan, in Glenorchay; Shiehallion, Ben More, and Ben Lawers in Perthshire; Bhillan, in Glenoce; Ben More, in the island of Mull; Bennanis, and other hills, in Rosshire; in fact, the whole of the great glen of Scotland, from Fort George to the Sound of Mull, comprehending the fresh-water lakes of Ness, Oich, and Lochy, together with the course of the two rivers, Ness and Lochy, from their very source to the spot of their forming a junction with the briny element, across the land eastward to the German Sea, to the westward expanse of the Atlantic Ocean. Nature, indeed, here presents herself on a scale of universal magnificence and vastness, offering objects not few in number, or of common interest.

CHAPTER XVI.

At the south-west of Mull, Colonsay, a spot interesting to the hearts of all sportsmen, as being one of the favoured resorts of the noble red-deer, and the Highland deer-hound, of which splendid animal Mr. Mr.Neil, the owner of Colonsay, is so true a friend, and has been, perhaps is, so celebrated a breeder—rises out of the sea like a shade of mist, though so far in the distance as to be seldom observable with the naked eye; a fact which scarcely needs comment when we state the distance at full fourscore miles. Neither was it our good fortune to witness the coast of Ireland, which many nevertheless affirm to be visible from the heights of Ben Nevis.

Such, however, is the wide extent of landscape seen from the towering Ben, reaching full fourscore miles from the horizon of the sea, on the north-east of Morayshire to the island of Colonsay on the southwest; and this is of so varied a nature—now the peaceful vale, now towering hills, now torrents of water, which here and there rattle down the precipices over rock and cliff, that the eye has scarcely time to rest on one object of interest ere it wanders to another. In a word, the number, the extent and variety of pleasing prospects, the wild and irregular freaks of nature, the diversity of shapes and colours,

the glassy surface of many a lake, the rippling waters of the sparkling sea, the struggling and rushing sounds of the many mountain streams, and, if the weather be but favourable, the exhilarating effects of mountain air, the glorious sun and the azure sky, form a scene so resplendent, and yet so calming, even in its grandeur, that the most fervid imagination will not be dissatisfied with a venture, even to the summit of Ben Nevis; an undertaking, if not easy of accomplishment, by no means impracticable in the course of seven or eight hours.

To those who visit that portion of the Highlands to which we have more particularly alluded, for the sole purpose of ascending Ben Nevis, we would suggest to them the advantage of making themselves as comfortable as circumstances will admit in the hostelry at Fort William, till they secure a fine day; not that it offers any peculiar features of elegance or cleanliness—virtues niggardly scattered on Highland

highways.

Like the hardy and contented-minded individual, however, who professed his powers of endurance with such humble fare as a beefsteak and a bottle of port, they may be enabled to follow his example, with fresh salmon from the rivers at hand, and the best of whisky toddy, without the loss of much patience or physical comfort.

To those who are not satisfied with the enjoyable sights we have enumerated as visible from the shoulder of Ben, we beg their company a few leagues

farther towards the Ness.

Previous, however, to recommending our line of march, we may briefly name the probability of her Majesty's steamer, Fairy, proceeding from Fort William by the Caledonian canal to Fort Augustus, should her size permit her passing through the locks.

If such be the case, we would give much to find ourselves, that identical morning, high up on the slopes of Ben Nevis, were it only to catch a glimpse of the Fairy on the waters, with her snaky pennant curling, and royal standard floating in the breeze; a trifling sight, though nevertheless an object which will, doubtless, obliterate for ever from Highland hearts the memory of all that may still remain in bitterness of the past, and tend doubly to cement the seal of the Union; erasing nationalities, save in the picturesque garb and romance of other days, from the minds of men, who, as Christians, worship one God, and, as subjects, obey one Sovereign.

To those also who are about to amuse themselves during the autumn in rambling amid Highland scenery, or whose intent it may be to pay their annual visit to the heathered hills—a determination on their parts which calls forth in ours the sin of envy—a hint may not be unacceptable in reference to the mode of approaching Loch Laggan otherwise than by the way of Fort William, should curiosity induce them to take a peep at the quarter chosen by a Prince to try his sporting qualities, which, as far as the gun is concerned, we have reason to believe

are by no means of an inferior order.

Travelling then from the south by the Highland road from Perth to Inverness, we come to the hostelry which we have already denominated, of Dalwhinie. From this spot the route breaks off towards Laggan through a wild interesting country, pursuing which, the traveller may not only have a passing glimpse of the royal sporting quarters, but also proceed, if he will, to Fort William, thence obtaining a view of all the splendid scenery we have already named; but, should he prefer it, he may deviate from the Fort William route, and passing by the

Corryarrick Zigzag, descend to the valley of the Ness, and halt for the night at Fort Augustus.

At Aviemore also, a well known hostelry for tired travellers on the Highland route, he will also find himself amid scenes of sporting excellence which can vie with most in the Highlands; and we must with truth admit, there are few roadside inns in Scotland which can surpass in comfort and cleanliness that of Aviemore, the landlord of which, for a consideration, was, and we believe now is, enabled to give the sportsman a good day's grouse shooting, or a good day's salmon fishing, and the traveller or tourist all necessary comforts for the inward man, as well as a good pair of horses, should he desire from thence to visit the route which borders the waters of Laggan.

Should Fort William not be found an agreeable halting quarter, an excursion onwards to Fort Augustus, either by the route which skirts the base of Ben Nevis, or a passage in the Caledonian steamboat, will amply repay the wanderer or the sportsman for his trouble, if trouble it be; for while the one, with eager eye and gratified taste, looks on the abundant and varied beauties which Nature in her loveliness has supplied for his recreation, the imagination of the other, extending beyond these sources of gratification, looks first on the fresh wide waters of Loch Lochy, which extends full fourteen miles through the wild valley, and fancy tells him many a

tale of Izaak Walton's art.

But now pursue your wanderings along the southern bank by the road, which continues along the water's edge about eight miles. Here, broken by rough and varied stones, collected by the rapid torrents which rush down the mountain sides when flowing from the heavy rains which visit this wild

locality in the season of the tempest and the flood, and leaving Loch Lochy, you behold Glengarry, a narrow, but most picturesque and romantic valley, bounded by mountains, whose densely wooded bases are filled with every feathered tribe of game, the antlered monarch of the north, and the graceful roedeer, while the ivy-grown ruin of Invergarry Castle, now the only remaining property of its ancient Lairds, speaks to the heart of many a bold but lawless warrior, who in days of clanship was wont to dwell there

in savage security.

Here again you behold another shooting quarter of an English nobleman, who, having purchased the extensive woodlands, moors, and wide acres of the present Laird of Glengarry, now, amidst his Highland tenantry, passes the autumnal months in following with his chosen friends the pleasures of every species of Highland sport, including deer stalking and salmon fishing, and that with success and abundance to be surpassed in few other localities. In the immediate vicinity of the ancient ruin we have named, which still gives to the Lairds of Glengarry the right of freehold over a small patch of land (all that remains to them of many thousand acres), stands the modern and commodious shooting lodge of Lord Ward.

The house, embosomed in trees, and beauteous in situation, is placed within half gunshot from the waters of the small but beautiful lake of Oich, which

encircles the lawn.

The banks of this lake, which does not exceed four miles in length, slope beautifully to the water, forming a number of little bays, while the surface is dotted over with several tufted islands; indeed, though insignificant in size, there are few lakes in Scotland more picturesque and interesting.

Leaving Loch Oich, the route ascends over hea-

thered hills till the head of the vast waters of Loch Ness are distinctly visible, with its rough and rocky wood-clad banks, variegated with every beauteous tint of nature, and on the northern extremity of which stands Fort Augustus, situated between the river Oich, which runs from the lake already named, as also the Tarff from Loch Tarff. As, however, we have endeavoured fully to describe Loch Ness in our previous pages, we will not inflict on our readers further comment on its beauties, however interesting they must ever be to those who love to dwell on the many sources of interest with which the neighbourhood abounds. Neither must we halt at Fort Augustus, though there, in that secluded spot, one of the forts selected as a military station after the Union, adds to the interest of the locality; nevertheless, we may name to those who are desirous of making it their abiding place for a brief period, that he or they will find a snug little inn, and if he be alone, and worthy of companionship, let him walk across the drawbridge, which in ancient days was wont to be lowered to friends only, but now, where all are friends, it forms the sole entrance for the visitor. On his right, having passed this bridge, he will enter the square of the Fort (where no longer warriors, in "coats of mail, and military pride," are lingering, and find the quarters of the governor. Knock at the door and it will be opened, and every attention granted you. Or, having taken your ease at your little inn, if the morning but break fair and bright, walk forth across the river Tarff by a wooden bridge, and having ascended a high hill on the other side, you will have a splendid view of Loch Ness, stretched for many a league beneath you, while the hamlet of Augustus and its fort will appear as a

U 3

country residence, obliterating in its peacefulness all recollection of bloodshed and civil feuds.

"Cold must be who ever gazed Impassive on its beauty."

Nevertheless, the associations that are aroused, cannot fail to heighten the delight with which such

scenes are contemplated.

Proceeding onwards, the glittering lake is lost to view, but instead of approaching, as all around you leads the mind to expect, a dreary, mountainous country, you will be agreeably surprised to find yourself entering a pleasant sequestered valley, through which a trout stream winds its rapid course into the Loch, the banks of which are richly clothed with birch, while the land on which your footsteps linger is on every side surrounded by high and rocky mountains.

Thence walk on with renewed vigour to the summit of Seechuimin, or Cummin's seat, where you will look on many a small but lovely Liliputian lake, for any one of which an English millionaire would readily pay the value of the estate which claims it, could it be transported to adorn his broad park lands in merry England; the largest of which is Loch Tarff, about three miles in circumference, in which here and there are scattered little tufted islands, on which stands the silvery birch, surrounded with brushwood and purple heather.

Such are the Highland scenes which present themselves to gratify the wanderer in the north. And pleasing are they to the sportsman also, even though he sport not, for while he looks on this lake we have named, with its surrounding beauties, he will recollect that it abounds with char, which, on a courteous request from its owner, will afford him many an

hour's recreation.

CHAPTER XVII.

WE must now bid adieu to the Highlands, perhaps for ever, with a few details in reference to the Isle of Skye, both as regards its sporting advantages, as well as with the view to point out briefly the many objects of interest which will there be found to greet the wanderer who may be disposed to venture so far north. In so doing we may remark, that we know of few summer trips that will more entirely repay the lover of wild scenery; while the sportsman will find ample employment for the rod, should shooting not be attainable.

As regards ourselves, we have more than once looked on the Coolin mountains, and passed many a pleasant hour on the heathered hills, which form the extensive patrimony of the Lord of the Isles. Indeed, did no other inducement offer itself for a visit to Skye, a perusal of Sir Walter Scott's beautiful poem of "The Lord of the Isles" would be sufficient to attract the steps of the wanderer to Skye's romantic shores, where the sportsman might exclaim with Ronald—

"If true mine eye,
These are the savage wilds that lie
North of Strathnardill and Dunskye.
No human foot comes here.
And since these adverse breezes blow,
If my good liege love hunters' bow,
What hinders that on land we go
And strike a mountain deer?"

For the information of those who desire to behold such spots, we may observe, that there are several modes of attaining their wishes; by far the most convenient of which, provided the object be solely that of visiting the island, is by steam boat, which, if we are not mistaken, plies regularly twice a week during the summer and autumnal months, and once during the winter, from Glasgow to Portree. For those who love the sea, this is a most agreeable mode of beholding some of the most romantic and interesting parts of the Highlands; yet, should the wind, on the morning selected for starting, be westerly or south-westerly inclined, and somewhat puffy withal, far better remain, and make your way by terra firma, for under the above circumstances no more disagreeable sea excursion exists that we wot of.

On the other hand, having weathered the entrance of the Clyde, fair weather and fair winds permitting, you look with admiration and comfort over the rocky promontory termed the Mull of Cantyre, and probably listen with a degree of calm resignation to all the direful tales which the undue rapidity of tides in that locality have inflicted on your fellowmen. If the weather be foul, however, no need to listen to romance, or look on that which may have proved so deadly to your neighbours; for the roar of waters, and tender disposition of the neighbouring cliffs, who long to hug you in their fond, but too rough embrace, will satisfy you for the nonce that 'tis as pleasing to hear the tale of the hardy sailor who has had proof of Cantyre's affection, on shore, as to endeavour by practical information to be enabled to tell of your own disasters.

Sail on, however, with a clear sky and light winds, and you will be well repaid the venture, as each league you glide through the clear blue sea, till—

"Mull's dark headland scarce they knew, And Ardnamurchan's hills were blue; But then the squalls blew close and hard, And fain to strike the galleys' yard— And take them to the oar—"

as was once our doom, having embarked at Portree, to pass a whole night beating about in sight of Ardnamurchan's point, in the month of November, with every chance of providing a breakfast for the sea-gulls instead of ourselves, on its iron-bound coast.

But the month of August offers better fare and better weather; and at such period of the year, having passed this second point, the steamer glides on through many a narrow channel, and many a splendid view of mountain and of wooded vale; repaying you well, e'en though you may have been somewhat inwardly unmanned by the roughness of the sea, till at length the narrow sound of Kyleakin tells you that accommodation is at hand; and landing at Dunvegan, you once more stretch your limbs on the heathered mountains.

It has been our good fortune, however, to travel to the Isle of Skye, or rather to the Ferry of Kyleakin, which divides the Isle of Skye from the main-land, both by the beautiful route from Glenmoriston on Loch Ness, as also from Invergarry on Loch Oich. The distance from either of which places is within an easy day to Skye; the country over which you pass being most interesting, and in all respects worthy of a sportsman's visit.

Arriving at Skye, we should recommend the halting place to be either at Portree or Dunvegan: at both accommodation is to be obtained, and that of a nature superior to most small places in the Highlands of Scotland. There are, we believe, but few

shootings let to the stranger in the Isle of Skye; the principal portion of the Island belonging to Lord Macdonald—himself, as all who know him are aware, a first-rate sportsman; the remaining portion, we surmise, being the property of Macleod of Macleod, with the exception of some trifling freeholds.

The Castle of Armisdale, the residence of the above-named Lord, is a most picturesque, and indeed handsome Highland mansion; and the woods in which it is embosomed—almost the only trees which are seen in Skye—prove what wealth can secure, even in a wilderness, and add greatly to the beauty of a locality which is surpassed by few in Scotland, and which gathers fresh interest as being the autumnal abiding place of the Lord of the Isles.

Lord Macdonald's moors are very extensive, and well preserved. We are not, however, enabled to speak accurately of the amount of game generally killed thereon during the grousing season, or of the present state of the game to be found there; yet we imagine he can tell a yearly tale sufficient to satisfy the most ardent desire of real sportsmen. Rut if the grouse on his moors are abundant, the deer in his forest are not only equally so in comparison, but rank among the finest in the Highlands. Indeed, we had once the good fortune to find ourselves in the Isle of Skye, on a fine summer's day almost immediately preceding the deer-stalking season.

Our object was more particularly, in the first instance, to gain the summit of a high portion of the Coolin mountains, from which we had been informed a most wild and extensive view was attainable, and thence to proceed to the lake of Coriskin—of which more anon. Having therefore left Dunvegan with this intention, we had scarcely gained our intended halting place, about midway between that place and

Portree, ere the dark clouds lowered, and the mist hung so heavily over the mountains, as to preclude any chance of our object being secured. We therefore determined on remaining at the rude hostelry for the night, in the hope that the following morning would prove more favourable. With this determination, having secured the only sitting room the house afforded, we awaited all chances.

The weather having become somewhat clearer as the afternoon advanced, we walked forth in companionship of a cigar, with the hope that, as the days were long, we might still gain the mountain-top ere night-fall; but the clouds still lowered so densely on its peaked summit, that we were soon convinced

the attempt would be fruitless.

At this moment of our disappointment, a forester, followed by one of the noble breed of deer-dogs, walked up to the door of the inn where we were standing, and him we immediately accosted as to the nature of the deer forest, the number of the deer, as also to the probability of our being gladdened by a sight of any of them during our intended walk across the island.

"I'm about to ascend the steep hill before us," said he, very civilly, though not precisely in the English language, "and if you like to be my companion, it is more than probable you may be gratified with a sight of some score of them."

As may be imagined, we readily assented to so agreeable a proposal: and well were we repaid for the fatirus of an hour or two's bridge.

for the fatigue of an hour or two's brisk walk.

"Awhile their route they silent made,
As men who stalk for mountain deer."

Lord of the Isles.

For hardly had we gained the summit of the hill he

named, when our arm was firmly clutched, and down we went, half buried in heather, beside the hardy forester.

"Whist!" said he, "and you'll see fourscore deer or more on you brae side."

We were soon made fully to understand, however, that silence and patience were absolutely necessary; and having calmly submitted to the orders of our chief in every respect-now creeping up the heather -now lying flat mid its flowery bed-now bobbing our head-now sliding along with back half broken, -we at length gained a point where, having taken breath, we were permitted to dwell on one of the finest pictures which sportsman's eye may wish to look on-namely, at least one hundred head of reddeer, peacefully grazing on the short green herb with which the opposite slope of a hill was covered, about three hundred yards distant from where we lay, most comfortably enjoying a full and uninterrupted view.

Having looked on and enjoyed this splendid sight till the western horizon informed us the sun would soon sink behind the countless hills seen in the distance, we arose, and moved on our return to the valley, where we intended to await the anxious hope

of a fine clear morning.

We had, however, scarcely taken ten paces, ere the whole herd of deer, following a common leader, raised their heads and started at a sharp trot, then formed in line, galloped over the hill-top, and were lost to us for ever. A sight so gratifying, indeed so splendid, once seen, can never be forgotten; a sight sufficiently convincing that the Lord of the Isles possesses a shooting quarter worthy of the days of his ancestors, and so stocked, and of such magnitude, as to satisfy the most ardent lover of deer-stalking.

There are red-deer also to be found, though, we imagine, in far less number, on the property of Mr. Macleod, as are his moorlands well stocked with grouse. And here, while we mention the name of this Highland Laird, we may add, that he is one who well merits the name he bears, and not less so the estimation in which he is held in the Isle of Skye: for there, amid the wild hills of his ancestors, he has raised a comparative palace on the foundations of his ancient castle, where, passing the greater portion of the year alike, amid winter's rigours and summer's sunshine, he cheers the hearts of the islanders by his presence and protection, and adds in every possible manner to their comfort and means of existence, by giving labour to the strong, and tendering the hand of benevolence to the weak. Such men well merit to head the race from which they inherit their possessions. And we can only add,-Would there were many more such!

Fatigued with our walk over the hills, we soon closed our eyes in sleep, (though, forsooth, our couch was none of those termed downy), requesting to be called with the sun, in order that we might start early on our intended excursion to Coriskin, and with the hope that the lowering clouds with which the day had darkened might clear from the mountains' tops during the night, and that all would be sunshine and brightness in the morn. But the hopes of man are but as feathers to be scattered to the winds; for, being aroused at daybreak from pleasing dreams by the rattling of a heavy shower against the windows, we felt that all hope of mountain views was at an end. This was sufficiently disheartening to one who had come some distance simply with the intention of visiting the wild scenery of this part of the country, still more so that

the dense mist which accompanied the downfall entirely shut out the mountains almost to their very bases, thus precluding all chance, all hope of the

prospect we had anticipated.

Determined, however, not to give up our enterprise, we waited only till the heaviest of the clouds and rain had passed away, and then started for Coriskin, about fourteen miles distant from the quarters where we had passed the night. Nothing, as we conceive, could exceed the wildness of the scenery through which we passed during the first seven miles of our walk, literally soaked by a Scotch mist, which precluded the sight of all around us, and this by the most rough and uninteresting sheeptracks, though enlivened we certainly were by the occasional rising of a grouse; but neither man nor beast did we meet with, and the deer were out of

range.

At length, after a brisk walk, we arrived at one of the most primitive Highland bothies that ere was erected for the residence of human being. We question whether all the art of Cubitt or of Nash could have imitated the rusticity of its appearance in an English pleasure-ground, even had the same materials been placed at their disposal; in fact, we entered a sort of cattle-shed formed of sods, with one opening in the top, for the double purpose of admitting light and giving vent to the smoke which issued from a peat fire that smouldered in the centre. the dense vapour of which so completely filled the room, if such it may be called, that it was some moments after our entrance ere the pupils of our eyes became sufficiently dilated to penetrate the obscurity. Here we found the family indolently reclining round the peat fire, on which a frugal meal of porridge was preparing, with the occasional





addition of milk and limpets, whose shells scattered about the entrance seemed to identify it as their chief means of subsistence. In short, everything bore the aspect of the most extreme poverty, and most unwholesome dirt.

Yet, in the midst of these miseries to the eye of civilization, there were no grounds for sorrow to the beholder, inasmuch as the sight was pleasingly blended with looks of cheerfulness and content, added to a disposition of kindness and hospitality, even to the offer of a share of the contents of the cauldron, which left a gratifying recollection on our hearts, and might have been an example to those who, with tenfold means, are loth to welcome the stranger.

Having halted a brief hour, to rest from the fatigues of our struggle over the rough sheep-tracks and swampy grounds, which had hitherto intercepted our path, the day having somewhat improved, we lighted our cigars, and bidding adieu to our rustic entertainers, hastened on our way, every mile of which became more wild and desolate. But while we advance, we may here observe, that we were greeted with the sight of numberless shaggy ponies, which in absolute wildness grazed on the hill-sides, among which we could have selected several pair which would not have disgraced the elegant phäeton of many a fair lady daily seen in the parks of London.

As may be supposed, this breed of ponies is peculiarly hardy. Permitted to range for almost the whole of the year on these remote hill-sides, they possess a sureness of foot ever desirable; and when brought to a more salubrious climate, and more abundant pasture, what may at first appear a wild animal, all bone, mane, and tail, is often found to be

a well shaped, well boned, useful, and even graceful pony. The price of these animals formerly averaged about 5l.; in fact, a selection of the best pair among

sixty, would not have exceeded ten.

The increased facilities of steam and railways have, however, materially altered all such matters; for while formerly Skye and the neighbouring isles alone afforded a market for them, hundreds are now annually sent to Glasgow, Edinburgh, and even Liverpool, from whence they naturally find their way to the small city of London. But even now a very moderate price will secure a much admired pair.

But we were now on the summit of one of the smaller range of the Coolin mountains, and every step we advanced offered fresh scenes of interest and delight. Indeed, a more exquisite and savage scene, or one of more romantic wildness and beauty, can scarcely be conceived; for here we looked down on the dark waters of Coriskin, surrounded by pathless and inaccessible mountains, the tops of which were here and there so rugged as strongly to resemble the shivered crater of an exhausted volcano. The eye rested on literally nothing but barren and naked rocks, and those on which we walked were as bare as the pavements of St. James's-street-not a sign of vegetation appeared; indeed, there can scarcely be found a spot in Europe so bare of all that is luxuriant in nature. Descend with us now to the shores of these dark waters, and you will agree with us, even be you a sportsman, that, with the exception of a herd of the noble antlered monarchs of the mountain, there is nothing more worthy of a visit, nothing more interesting and remarkable, in the whole length and breadth of the Isle of Skye.

It is true, the mist still lingered, not only on the

mountain-tops, but also here and there even on the surface of the lake, which our guide informed us was popularly called the Water Kettle; the proper name of which is Coriskin—from the deep corrie, or hollow, in the mountains of Coolin, which affords the basin for this wonderful sheet of water—on which there are one or two small islets, almost covered with juniper or some such bushy shrub. Upon the whole, though we may have witnessed scenes of desolation more extensive and more solemn, never have we looked on one which dwells more deeply on the eye and heart than that at Coriskin, at the same time that the rugged grandeur of its mountains redeemed it from entire dreariness.

From this lake to the sea the distance is not great; time, however, did not permit of our lingering long; but, for the sake of our sporting friends, we may add, that the waters which rush towards that sea are filled with hundreds of trout and salmon struggling onwards in their journey to the fresh waters of the lake; while the wild and infinite number of sea-fowl, hovering over their prey, offer many an hour's amusement with the rifle and the fowling-piece.

We have dwelt but briefly on the interest of a spot which all who visit Skye should endeavour to behold; they will be amply repaid for the difficulties they may encounter in their route. And the beautiful lines of Scott, who refers to Coriskin, will sink with truthfulness in their memory, and substantiate our assertions.

"I've traversed many a mountain strand,
Abroad and in my native land,
And it has been my lot to tread
Where safety more than pleasure led:
Thus many a waste I've wander'd o'er,
Climb'd many a crag, crossed many a moor;
But, by my halidome,

A scene so rude, so wild as this, Yet so sublime in barrenness, Ne'er did my wandering footsteps press, Where'er I happ'd to roam."

On leaving Coriskin, one of the hardest day's walking we have ever encountered, at length closed an excursion of most unusual interest; and as, feverish, exhausted, and soaked, we entered the little hostelry at Dunvegan, where we awaited the arrival of the steamer on the following day to convey us from such wild scenes to more southern lands, we felt, and felt truly, that pleasing as may be, and are, the reminiscences of many a sweet and flowery spot where the hand of nature has rested in luxuriance of foliage and beauty, there is scarcely less pleasure—certainly more excitement, to be gained in scenes of wildness, where the hand of man intrudeth not, as you wander—

"On mountain or in glen, Nor tree, nor shrub, nor plant, nor flower, Nor aught of vegetative power, The weary eye may ken,"

Previous to leaving Skye, we may add, that there are abundant small lakes, formed from the arms of the sea, where excellent trout fishing may be obtained for the asking; and he who desires to cast a fly thereon, as well as in many of the numerous trout streams which intersect the glens of Skye, will be amply repaid for a visit to those waters.

On the opposite shores of Invernesshire may also be seen the Highland residence of Mr. Mackenzie, of Applecross, whose moors abound in grouse, and whose deer-forest is one of the best provided in the Highlands. And the island of Uist, the property of the Earl of Dunmore, is also well stocked with these

noble animals, as are also his heathered hills with

grouse.

But we must now bid adieu to scenes never to be forgotten till the memory of pleasant days of sport-ing wandering cease to give us interest; or that the grouse season's annual arrival causes our heart to beat with the desire to be treading the flowery heather: the approach of which in 1847, now so near at hand, we trust may offer abundant sport and success to all who visit the land of the mountain and the flood. Though we greatly fear the game book at many of the best quarters will tell but a sorry tale-for even while we write we have before us details which give but little reason to hope for abundance; indeed, from one of the best quarters in Perthshire, we have received the following information :-

"After a day's fishing on Loch Tay, we arrived here, I am sorry to say, to hear nothing but the most miserable reports of grouse; F-, the keeper, never having known anything at all like it. On the north side of the river, there is scarcely a bird left alive, distemper has made so complete a sweep: the south side rather better, but very few in a brood."

This is difficult to be accounted for, and much to be regretted; nevertheless, when the glorious day arrives, we trust matters may be found somewhat better than this account leads us to anticipate.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"Where the Northern Ocean in vast whirls Boils round the naked, melancholy Isles Of further Thule, and the Atlantic surge Pours in among the stormy Hebrides. Who can recount what transmigrations there Are annual made? What nations come and go? And how the living clouds arise Infinite wings! till all the plume-dark air And rude resounding shore are one wild cry!"

ALTHOUGH neither the Shetland, nor more immediate Isles of Orkney, can be named, in reference to their natural beauties, or as regards the customs, manners, or habits of those who vegetate in that wild portion of Her Majesty's northern dominions, with their neighbours of the Scottish mainland, yet do they contain many a source of interest, which will amply repay the sportsman or tourist who, selecting the fair weather of summer, ventures a ramble o'er the grassy hills where the graceful Minna, and still more lovely Brenda, were wont to wander; though neither in the former will he find the old Norwegian Udaler to tender him hospitality, nor a Norna of the fitful head, with whom to while away an idle hour in magic story; nor in the latter will he meet a Cleveland or a Bruce, with their pirate crew. Yet, should he visit Kirkwall, a week or two may nevertheless be well spent amid such

scenes, to say nothing of the sport of shooting the multitudes of wild fowl, of every species, which are to be met with in numbers beyond all belief in those Northern Isles, varied by a day or two in company with the seals, which congregate in hundreds on

their rocky shores.

There, also, when weary of such sport, some relaxation offers itself in visiting the hills, and selecting a pair of shelties, -although the quantity, as well as the quality, has materially diminished of late years, doubtless owing to the facility which constant steam communication offers for supplying the markets of the south with Liliputian ponies, as well as Orkney mutton, only to be surpassed by that of Portland. These little shaggy animals—heretofore scarcely known in England, save as a prize to some newly breeched scion of the aristocracy-brought shoeless from their wild native hills, where hitherto they have existed on the Lord knows what in the winter, for assert we dare not-sold for a sum not exceeding the value of an English donkey, are now bought up by scores for the southern dealer, who naturally doubles their value to all English purchasers, in proportion as the islanders have ascertained it from the increased demand. Even now, however, you may still see them at the fair of Kirkwall, and listen also, as we have done, to the voice of the pedlar who sells his wares beneath the ancient walls of the cathedral of St. Magnus.

Previous, however, to dwelling on the peculiarities of the Orkney and Shetland Isles, either as regards their sporting qualities or local interests, let us speak as to the most agreeable mode of placing foot on their shores; the former of which, at all periods of the year, is most difficult of access from the mainland of Scotland, save in the fairest weather and

during the most favourable tides, owing to the uncertain waters and extraordinary rapidity of those of the Pentland Frith; whereas the latter, until very recently, was almost entirely cut off from all communication with the mainland, save by the occasional fortunate event of a vessel's arrival from Aberdeen, or other eastern port, which, at uncertain periods during the summer, but rarely during the winter, made its welcome appearance on their rocky coast.

Indeed, it is a strange, but not the less true, statement, that until within the last ten years, notwithstanding the power of steam being used as a means of transit to all the nations of Europe, so large a portion of Her Majesty's northern subjects, in number not less than thirty thousand, should be thus almost absolutely excluded from any participation in the advantages obtained by all other portions of Great Britain; indeed, deprived of communication with their fellow-men, as were they in some far distant land of the foreigner.

The assertion of "better late than never" is, however, a just one; and matters are now unquestionably improved; there is, nevertheless, still a wide field, and it would doubtless be agreeable to these northern islanders did Prince Albert, who is a tourist and a sportsman, feel inclined to have a crack at a seal, or bid for a pony, some fine summer day, en attendant the more noble sport of deer-stalking; inasmuch as the Shetlanders might then lay some claim to the commiseration of the generous people of England—if still neglected, as they have ever been, by their canny neighbours.

To those who may desire to visit the Orkneys the inhabitants of which are now a mixed race between the old Norwegian line and the more recent Scoth importations, but nevertheless, most hospitable and agreeable people — we suggest their taking passage on board a very commodious and well regulated steamer of 250 horse-power, which starts, if we err not, each Tuesday, during the summer and autumnal months, from the Grantham Pier, at Leith. Her captain, be he the same corpulent gentleman as was wont to pace her decks in the days that we were wandering, is not only an amiable man and most admirable seaman,—a qualification which, in good faith, is not seldom required in his passage on one of the most turbulent seas in Europe, or the world—but also one of considerable information, of which he is rarely niggardly to those who desire such favour.

Should you touch at Arbroath, on the eastern coast of Scotland-which is generally the case, weather permitting; as also at Stonehaven-and thence to the proud, cold City of Aberdeen, he will point out to you all spots and places which your guide-book has laid down; and tell you many a tale of the Bell Rock, and of Dunstaffnege Castle; and, having given you time to pass an hour or two in the above-named city, he will steam you on to Wicksweet locale of herrings and of dirt-from whence, rounding the northern headland of that bay, you will cross the turbulent waters of the Pentland Frith; till, at length, gliding through many a rocky isle and islet, you will drop your anchor in the harbour of Kirkwall, and look on the ancient tower of St. Magnus.

Thence, should your intention be that of proceeding still onwards on your rambles, even to the shores of Shetland, he will carefully steer your gallant bark round the rugged promontory of Shumburgh Head—for such is the wild and precipitous

cliff against which the pirate "Bruce," though not a less wary seamen, managed to wreck his clever little Revenge;—and steering, with well-known knowledge of the dangers which surround him, through many an eddying whirlpool, you will weather the abrupt coast, look on the summit of Roeness Hill, and hear the rattling of the cable as it falls yard by yard into

the still waters of Limerick Bay.

But, should your intention be that of remaining to amuse yourself at Kirkwall, you will there find a very decent little hostelry, which should it please you not, you can cross the island to Stromness, and visit the harbour, a sight of which has made the tear of joy to glisten in many a hardy sailor's eye, who has been previously hugged for hours in the rough embrace of the Pentland tides. Time will be afforded you for this excursion, ere the steamer, which, being chartered to convey the mails, is therefore tolerably regular as to time, returns.

On the other hand, should you desire to visit the Orkneys from the mainland, thus crossing by the way of the rough and turbulent Pentland Frith, finding yourself at Wick-a locale in which most assuredly you will remain not a moment longer than necessity compels, inasmuch as a more vile and dirty hole Scotland cannot produce, and more can scarcely be advanced in its disfavour--you have then a distance of eighteen miles to drive, in any vehicle which chance and the aid of siller may put you in possession of, to the house of John O'Groat, that is to say, to the spot which that illustrious individual selected as a freehold on which to found his home-a home which no longer exists, save in the imagination of man. In the immediate neighbourhood, however, of that spot, where once the house stood, you will still

find scattered a few sheillings or cottages, one of

which glories in the name of the "Mariner" of Huna, and is, in fact, the most northern hotel, post-office, and house of her Majesty's northern dominions, pretending to offer accommodation to the traveller; but in which you can rarely indulge your gastronomic desires, be your appetite ever so exciting, even to the obtaining of an egg.

There, on that lonely spot, as you lounge along a shore literally formed of minute shells, so desolate is all around you that your mind can scarcely bring back the imagination to southern civilization; the only human being who may chance to cross your path being some ill-remunerated and hardy individuals, whose chief means of existence is derived from the dangerous and laborious occupation of conveying the mail-bags to and fro across the rapid Frith.

Never can we forget the night that it was our illfortune to pass in this dog-hole, in the anxious hope that the dawn of a fair bright morning would enable us to take a passage across these turbulent waters in safety. When, however, the sun did rise, it was only to throw its faint rays, struggling through a misty rain, over one of the most tempestuous seas and tremendous currents it is possible for the mind of man to conceive. Indeed, all hope of crossing in comfort was out of the question, for the rapid waters roared and swelled; and, notwithstanding that the anxiety of the hardy boatmen to perform their duty, and obtain their paltry wages, of which they were otherwise deprived, induced them to put to sea, with the endeavour of making their passage; drenched to the skin, and well nigh swamped, they were soon obliged to return to the shore, which they reached with difficulty, and in imminent danger of their lives.

And these are the waters of the Pentland Frith; a channel, alas! but too well known to all the inhabitants of the Northern Isles; for have not its angry waters been the tomb alike of the father and the son, the mother and her infant? Indeed, there is not a mariner who has ventured on those uncertain waters, but has pronounced them as most perilous—perhaps

the most perilous channel in Europe.

Yet were we informed that it was, probably now now is, considered by the "theoretical" bunglers of the Edinburgh Post-office department-who waft their theory to St. Martin's for the edification of those who must be of course practically acquainted in such matters (most of them having never even crossed the Border), as a mere arm of some calm lake, practical and easy of passage at all periods, in all tides, and during all seasons. And while they are or ought to be aware that the boats, thus employed by Government to convey the mails, are the only public means of conveyance from the mainland of Scotland to the Orkneys; yet even the annual boon of a few pounds yearly was felt, as we were told by the boatmen, to be far too heavy a burden on the exchequer to be thus risked in the hope of benefitting some thousands of human beings in so far distant and so little cared for a locale; or with hope of saving the lives of those employed in the service of the Crown, for which they receive a most unworthy pittance.

Rowland Hill, and his present chief, however, have far more expansive views; and, happily, more just and liberal notions than hitherto have found place in the heads or hearts of Post-office secretaries; and it is, therefore, to be hoped, that although hitherto the energies of the whole department have been employed solely in making an increase to the

revenue, without the slightest consideration as regards practical accommodation to the public, they may henceforth have it instilled into their minds, that instead of everlastingly counting up their pence to show a good quarterly surplus, their best means of obtaining that surplus would be, by listening to the suggestions of their practical officers, and doing their utmost to further the advance of civilization, and extend the comforts of every class of the community throughout the British dominions, whether at John O'Groat's House or Richmond Hill.

But let us now return to the subject from which we have wandered from feelings excited in our minds by the just complaints of the Government servants employed as boatmen to convey the mails across the Pentland Frith; and which dangerous channel of the sea we have crossed more than once in fair weather, yet even then with so little comfort as to leave us no inducement to recommend either sportsman or tourist to make the attempt, if his object be simply that of visiting the Orkneys.

While these islands belonged to Norway and Denmark, many Norwegians settled on them, and their language was exclusively in use; but, since they have been annexed to Scotland, a great change has taken place, and the Norse tongue has long since ceased to

be heard.

A few relics of the Udal tenure—the universal tenure of land among free nations of the north—may still be found; and there are instances of families still inhabiting the Orkneys, who possess landed property which has descended from father to son from time immemorial. The present inhabitants are an intelligent, educated, moral, and hospitable people; indeed we may name, as a subject of some surprise, that notwithstanding the local difficulties

they have to contend with, they appear in every respect more civilized and more intellectual than their neighbours of the Scottish mainland, notwithstanding the vaunted education of the lower class,

both Highlander and Lowlander.

The Orkneys, in centuries past, were the general rendezvous of the piratical fleets which constantly devastated the coasts alike of England and of France; and it was not till the year 1468 that the islands were pledged to Scotland-a pledge, we know not how to congratulate them, which has never been redeemed.

Kirkwall, situated in a bay on the north coast of Ponoma, is the capital of the islands; and the visitor of this remote district will be gratified by a sight of the cathedral of St. Magnus, which is one of the most remarkable specimens of middle-age architecture in Scotland, having been built by Olave, king of Denmark. In its immediate vicinity, the ruins of the Bishop's palace still offer an object of interest; as also the palace of the Earl of Stewart, the last feudal Earl of Orkney, who was executed for high treason.

The town is situated close to the sea, its narrow and ill-paved streets having all the appearance of a

Norman town.

The Isles of Orkney can boast of little game, although, on some parts of the higher lands, many grouse are to be met with, as also abundant hares; as a shooting quarter, however, it is out of the question: for even were the difficulties which offer themselves for approaching the island a matter of less importance when pleasure is the object, there is decidedly not sufficient game to offer a very tempting bait for so long a journey to the Southron. To him, however, who lands at Kirkwall, with the intention of rambling through the Orkneys in search of beauties





which he has found in fairer lands, and who, at the same time being a sportsman, has prepared himself for all chances, by numbering among his baggage for the line of march, a double-barrel and a fishingrod, may chance to pass a morning on the Wideford hill of Pomona agreeably, and cast many a successful fly in the rippling waters and lakes with which the isles abound. Sea-fowl also visit the Orkneys in thousands; and a protecting Providence, caring for and watching over all, appears to have selected the rocky coast of these wild islands as an abundant abiding place for fish, whereby numerous families are provided with a means of existence otherwise unattainable. Cod-fish, herrings and lobsters abound along the coast; indeed the London market, we are credibly informed, is chiefly supplied with lobsters from the Orkneys. The neighbouring shores are also constantly visited by seals; from which, indeed, it has been conjectured that the islands derive their name-orc, in the language of the Northman, signifying seal.

Let those who love to dwell on the dark waters of the deep blue sea, and who desire a shot at a seaeagle, there called bonxie, or Scua-gull, a very rare bird, which rears its young on the high hills of Foula and other places, come with us to Shetland.

We scarcely ever recollect a more glorious summer's night than that, when, standing on the deck of the large steamer we have already named, we beheld the rays of a bright moon cast her glittering beams on the swelling waters, which rolled towards the shores of Tair Isle; and subsequently having breasted the unexampled tide, which literally roars, even in its calmness, round the rocky base of Shumburgh Head, we cast our anchor in the Bay of Lerwick soon after midnight—if night there be at all in

that northern latitude, for there the long days of midsummer rarely say farewell, or are clothed in darkness. At a reasonable hour in the morning subsequent to our arrival, we landed on the little pier of Shetland's capital; but had scarcely set foot on this northern isle, ere the hand of the stranger was held forth in kindness and hospitality to bid us welcome, and offer us those courtesies so doubly

gratifying when unexpected and unsought.

Nevertheless, on such occasions, when the object is to see everything worthy and within the range of possibility of being seen, without entailing unnecessary trouble on others, we hold that it is far better to secure an independent resting place, under the roof of public accommodation, where you may command the waiter at discretion, if such be your pleasure and he be well paid, rather than lay your head to rest on the pillow of any man, however much you may regard him, or appreciate his generous offers of hospitality. With feelings such as these, therefore, although we gratefully accepted the invitation which had been courteously tendered us as far as that most essential pastime dinner was concerned, we declined the rest, and forthwith walked through the only street, curious and narrow as it is, which with some hundred additional straggling houses, form the city-for city we conclude it must be, of Lerwick. We arrived at the sign of the Udaler, the principal, in fact only abiding place for tired and hungry travellers, and solicited accomodation, which, such as it proved, was immediately placed at our disposal; the only public sitting room, in fact, the only good apartment which the establishment could boast of, (that we had obtained being literally a closet) being already occupied by a young Englishman.

Having secured, therefore, such as we could get, we set forth to see the sights—if sights there were to see in this, the only town of Shetland, and the capital of the island. The houses, originally built merely for the accomodation of fishermen from foreign countries, who annually visited Shetland during the cod and herring season, line the water's edge; and as there are no roads throughout the interior of the island, till very recently no wheeled vehicle has been seen there; and even now, a cart or a pony-chair, belonging to the amiable gentleman who had greeted us on our arrival, and who, having built a commodious house within a mile or two of the town, had made an approach thereto, is all in the carriage line the island can produce.

Streets were, therefore, never thought of; and consequently the town presents a singularly confused appearance, with no other thoroughfare than a tortuous, ill-paved lane between the houses. It is nevertheless, more particularly at the periods of the steamer's arrival from the mainland, a bustling, interesting little place, with a thriving and industrious population, possessing some well-supplied shops; and has so good a harbour, protected by the shores of Bressy Island on the one side, and by those of the mainland on the other, that Lerwick ought to become a town of considerable commercial im-

portance.

Having passed the principal portion of our first day in Shetland in walking about the town and immediate neighbourhood, with the intention of visiting the interior of the island on the morrow, we returned in the afternoon to our hostelry, in order to prepare for the hospitalities of Mr. ——, when curiosity induced us to peep into the apartments we had been informed were occupied by an Englishman; and true enough,

there sat, writing, a countryman. On seeing him, our first impression was that of apologizing for our intrusion, but a courteous welcome satisfied us on this point; and a glance at the occupier of the room convinced us, that had not some casual care clouded a brow of unusual frankness, merriment and laughter

would have reigned there.

"This moment I was taking the liberty of writing to you," said he; "yes, writing to you, sir; and at this you will be the less surprised, when I tell you the very unpleasant predicament in which I am placed; and still more so, when I further add an explanation of it. The facts are simply these :-Having been shooting with a friend in the neighbourhood of Tongue, west of Thurso, I was informed that a steamer touched each week at Wick, on its passage to the Shetland Isles, which I had much curiosity to visit. With this intention, I started last week, with the view of meeting my servant, whom I had sent forward to Wick with my baggage; but, owing to some delay, I did not reach that place till the very moment the steamer was about to leave. To jump, therefore, into a shore-boat, and get on board as she was fairly under weigh, was literally all that I could accomplish; and having done this, so interested was I at looking at the wild and rocky declivities which formed the entrance to the bay, the distant town and country, that we were well nigh a league in sea ere I discovered that neither my servant nor baggage was on board; indeed with the exception of a carpet-bag containing some linen and books. which I had luckily retained, I had nothing but the clothes on my back, and barely sufficient means to pay my passage here. Finding myself in such a predicament, although my first thought was to return by the steamer, on consideration, and being desirous to visit the interior of the islands, fearing also I might miss him, I determined to make myself as comfortable as circumstances would permit, and therefore wrote for my servant to join me with my goods and chattels; the steamer has, however, again arrived, and my position is worse than before, for no servant has made his appearance; and here I am, without means or clothes, or indeed the knowledge of how to act."

After this explanation, and putting just faith in the manners and appearance of the gentlemanlike stranger, many members of whose family we recently found we were known to, we soon relieved his mind of any further anxiety as to the means of joining his servant and baggage by the return of the vessel; and as he had already become acquainted with those parts of the interior we were desirous of visiting, we determined to sally forth in company on the morrow, in order that we might be enabled to enjoy as much as possible of the island scenery ere the vessel started again on her return to the mainland of Scotland.

Having arranged this matter, we prepared to join the festivities of the hospitable mansion of ——, which, in modern comfort, is built by the side of a lake, about half a league distant from the town of Lerwick. All around, however, is barren hill and uninteresting country; but the careful hand of art has done all that man could do to make that, which in nature is wild and desolate, pleasing to the eye, and agreeable as a residence. A view of the lake on the one side, with its neighbouring hills, and on the other, the distant islands of Fetlar, Papa-Stour, Bressay, and the wide ocean, break the monotony of a scene which would otherwise leave nothing but

desolate effects on the mind. A garden also surrounds the habitation, in which every attempt at cultivation, in many cases successfully made, adds to the general appearance of comfort, if not luxuriance; in fact, this is perhaps the only spot in the whole island where the flowers of summer may be plucked, or luxuriant vegetation finds a resting-place.

Nothing could exceed the kindness of our warmhearted and liberal host; and as the party which assembled, consisting of some few Englishmen who like ourselves had visited the northern shores for the sake of the scenery, together with the commandant of the little fort, and other residents of Lerwick, sat at the well-supplied board, arranged with all the luxury and comfort of our southern homes, we soon forgot, amid the merriment and joviality of the evening, that we were far from the land of our birth, or that nature in its barrenness surrounded us. we first tasted the tusk-fish, which is excellent in flavour, and, together with the ling, is one of the most valuable and hazardous of the open sea fisheries, which contribute largely to the prosperity of the settlement.

This agreeable meeting, which lasted till well nigh midnight, over, the whole party lighted their

cigars, and prepared to return to Lerwick.

The night was one of unusual brilliancy—countless stars glittered in the wide expanse of heaven, and the air, soft, yet fresh, added greatly to the comfort of our ramble homewards. The midnight hour had tolled, yet all was so clear and brilliant, though no fulness of moon lighted our path, that every object appeared as clearly to the eye as were it mid-day; indeed, in the high latitude of Shetland, the light of day at Midsummer never totally disappears, and the smallest print can be read at midnight, when the

lingering rays of the preceding day mingle with and give way to the early dawn of the morrow. Of this fact we had sufficient proof, as one of our party produced a copy of the Times newspaper from his pocket, every letter of which was distinctly visible.

During the winter the nights are proportionately long and dreary; and, in the month of December, the sun is not above the horizon more than five hours and twenty minutes; making these Northern Isles, cut off as they then are from all but rare means of communication with the mainland, we should imagine, one of the most dreary places of residence in Europe. Books, too, must be few; the pleasures of the daily press less attainable than were you on the banks of the Sutlej; society limited and ever formed by the same circle; and as for sporting, save amid the feathered tribe which inhabit

the rocky cliffs, that is out of the question.

The morning subsequent to our hospitable entertainment dawned in every respect favourable to our intended excursion across the island, or as there termed, the mainland of Shetland; and having stowed away a hearty and substantial breakfast, in company with the agreeable acquaintance whose misfortunes had introduced him to us, we mounted some small but powerful little shelties, and prepared to follow our guide across the mountain-tracks. Thus, as we rode along in agreeable conversation over hill and dale, we had ample time to look on the wildness with which on all sides we were surrounded, which the clearness of the horizon made less sad, yet more distinct to view.

The surface of the island is particularly rugged and wild, and not unfrequently bears the appearance of actual desolation and sterility; indeed, the small tracts of cultivated and fertile land generally near the vales and sea coast, rich pastures, and bright green meadows, are pleasing exceptions to the general character of the country; yet, like angels' visits, few and far between, Yet the majestic cliffs and towering headlands that frown over the stormy seas; the turbulent surges raised by the conflicting currents and torrents that sweep round the headlands; the numerous detached and very singular pyramids of rock which rise to a great elevation along several parts of the coast, and the openings of innumerable lofty and dark caverns in the cliffs and precipices along the shore, some of great beauty, and others of gloomy grandeur, either separately or grouped together, form very magnificent and highly picturesque features; a sight of which will amply repay the lover of such savage scenes, should he venture to cross the rough and uncertain waters which separate the Shetlanders from their Scottish neighbours.

But of all the objects most worthy of interest, in our humble opinion, is one which we beheld about mid-day, after a long march—half ride, half ramble—across treeless moors, stony hills, and rough sheep-tracks, to the south-eastern extremity of the island. There, on a point or headland, which towers above the roaring sea, which even in its calmness swells like thunder against the rocky shore, you will be interested by the sight of a small island, if such it can be designated, the top of which forms a grass plot; in extent about one quarter of an acre, on the very surface of a cliff, which appears as if rent from the neighbouring mainland by some sudden effort of angry Nature. This abrupt and almost triangular cliff or headland, which stands as if in defiance of the thundering waters which rush around its base about forty yards from the coast, becomes an object of greater curiosity when we relate the fact, that

man in his boldness has obtained an approach thereto

by the means of a basket slung on ropes.

To him who looks on this tremendous cliff, and watches the turbulent sea, which boils and foams some hundred yards beneath the spot on which he stands, it becomes a matter of wonder and surprise that any human being should trust himself in so frail a means of conveyance, for an object which is scarcely of sufficient interest to mention even in these pages. It is nevertheless a fact, that a few hardy islanders, having cast an eye of desire on the luxuriant herb which flourished on this extraordinary rock, became jealous of the myriads of gulls which were wont to make it their resting-place; surmising, perhaps justly, that the pasture was better suited to the wants of their little sheep which fed on the mainland. With difficulty, one more bold than his comrades, a rope encircling his waist, made his way down the precipitous side of the cliffs, swam boldly across the narrow channel of turbulent waves which roar between the rocks, and with almost incredible activity-now climbing, now crawling-gained the summit of the island. Having attained this point, his comrades formed a means of communication by attaching a stone to the end of a string, which they threw across the gulf: ropes were thus drawn over, then stakes, then implements to drive them in the earth; on these a strong basket was at length ingeniously slung, in which an individual ventured, a cord being attached to each side, and thus he was enabled to drag himself across.

These matters satisfactorily arranged, what was at first a most hazardous means of conveyance was at length so improved on as to become tolerably safe, and now has for years existed as a mode by which not only do these adventurous Shetlanders cross from the mainland to the little island, but actually carrying in their laps, while seated in the perilous basket, sheep after sheep, which having disposed on the grassy plot, they leave to feed on the sweet herb. without the slightest protection from the blasts of heaven, or aught else than their own instinct to proteet them during the day; but tenfold more so during the darkness of night, from the dangers which surround them. Indeed, were a rope to break in crossing, or the slightest accident to occur, man and beast would be cast some hundred yards below in the foaming element, to eternity. For the small donation of half-a-crown, those who visit this spot will find more than one individual ready to cross and recross the dark and tremendous chasm. And we must own that curiosity induced us not only to expend that sum to behold the venture, but we also witnessed the feat of a sheep being also carefully conveyed to his neighbours, who fed quietly on the sweet herb.

This one hazardous step was, however, quite sufficient to satisfy our curiosity; and as, with nerves extended to the full, we watched the frightful progress of the basket, and its living contents of man and beast, we must own we felt regret that no means could be put in force to prevent the risk of human life for so little advantage.

The hundreds of sea-fowl which whirled around the rocks, sending forth their screams and piercing cries as we fired a ball at a cormorant floating on the ocean beneath, all contributed to a scene whose wildness and desolation, yet peculiar interest, once seen,

can scarcely be erased from the memory.

Having lingered long on this spot, and viewed from the distance many a rocky eminence and distant island, which the brightness of the day fortunately placed more distinctly on the horizon, we prepared by a different route, to return to Lerwick, as the steamer in which we intended to re-embark was to heave her anchor that evening.

During the whole of our walk, however, the same uninteresting country alone was to be seen, not a tree, not a shrub to enliven the monotony of our walk; and as for game, though a few hares, we were told, existed in the island, not a grouse, or any other species of the game tribe, did we meet with.

For the information of sportsmen, however, we may observe, that they will readily find a great number and variety of sea-fowl, which render the ornithology of the district an interesting study. The sea-eagle, previously alluded to in these pages, and there called bonxie, or Scua-gull, a very rare bird, rears its young in the high hills of Foula and other elevated places. The great owl, termed provincially katogle; the arctic and parasite gull, the cormorant, guillemots, lyres, or shearwaters, kittywakes, sheldrakes, terns, sea-hawks, and a vast variety of similar birds, are all common to Shetland. And the slaughter of seals in the deep caverns and rocky borders of the sea-coast is in itself quite sufficient sport to enable the lover of wild scenery to pass a week in good fellowship with the hospitable and simple-hearted Shetlander.

CHAPTER XIX.

Connected also with other matters of interest afforded to him who rambles as we did on the lands of the Udaler, we cannot close this rough account of our most pleasing excursion, without making some additional remarks to those we have already made, in regard to those diminutive and graceful little animals, the Shetland ponies. These little creatures, now so well known all over England, indeed Europe, from the facility of exportation heretofore named, are supposed to exist to the number of at least ten thousand in the Shetland Isles. The pure breed are to be had at the low standard of eight hands, the largest never exceeding twelve; we allude, of course, to the true and uncontaminated breed.

And these little animals, notwithstanding their being allowed to provide for themselves, ranging whither their will directs, over hill and pasture, alike by day and night, during the warmth of summer as in winter's bleakness, are nevertheless vigorous in proportion to their size, beyond all belief, capable of carrying great weights, and are naturally hardy in accordance with their mode of existence.

The Shetland cow, equally diminutive in size and in weight, but rarely exceeding two hundred and eighty pounds, yet yielding three English quarts of milk per day, is another animal peculiar to these northern isles, as graceful in form, and, when well fed, as excellent in flesh, as the best beef to be purchased in the London market.

The native sheep may also be classed amongst the wild animals which feed on the pasture, and range the numerous hills between Feideland and Shumburgh Head, from Sandness to the Noup of Nesting. These little creatures, in number exceeding sixty thousand, are remarkable for their diminutive size and weight, which seldom reaches thirty pounds; and being totally free from the care or protection of a shepherd, they have attained a degree of fleetness and instinct which would be considered foreign to the nature of the animal, by those who have witnessed none but flocks, the tinkling bell of whose leader has sounded far up the valley of some rich and luxuriant pasture-land of merry England.

But we have dwelt longer than we had intended on the interest of the Shetland Isles-a portion of her Majesty's dominions we never can regret having visited; a spot in the far bleak north, to the comfort of which we would still hope the legislature may cast a thought and give a care; for there, amid those wild hills on the borders of those rocky shores, live, exist, and labour under the protection, and as subjects, of the British throne, thirty thousand souls. But the "blue peter" floats aloft on board the royal mail steamer, and the hissing and spluttering steam reminds us that, should we not hasten, like our brother in distress, whom we have rescued from his loneliness, we may be doomed to while away a week in riding Shetland ponies, shooting cormorants and seals, or searching for bonxies' eggs-several amusements, all agreeable in due season, but which at the moment we could dispense with.

On board once more, the revolving paddles soon

told that we were rapidly bidding farewell to the Shetlanders; and as we advanced, the lowering clouds on Shumburgh's towering head, on which we gazed as if the figure of Norna was about to appear on the top of some wild peak for our especial gratification, reminded us that the brightness of the day was past, and that we might look out for what the sailors term a dirty night—an unpleasant truth, the commencement of which was practically proved to us by the unusual rolling of our large vessel, which was hurled like a cork amid the terrible tides, which handled us roughly and uncourteously as we bade the bold and darkening cliffs adieu! In fact, the recollections of that tempestuous night can never be erased from our memory—a memory which scarcely needed jogging, as far as regards the circumstance of our very soon feeling a dreadful alloverishness, which compelled us to turn in—had we not, at the moment we now write, been forcibly reminded of the fact; having an hour since dined luxuriantly on machereau à la sauce piquante, a loin of Dartmoor mutton, stewed in a manner which would have proved satisfactory to the veriest gourmand, to say nothing of a lobster fresh from the blue ocean on which our window looks, and with which having made too free, the slight sensations which we experienced, together with our subject, at once recalled the fact of how we lay all that night in the bay before Fair Isle. And as the light of day once more broke, as we hoped, to our great relief, we heard a sudden crash, so terrible, so loud, so unpleasant to us a landsman, that earnestly we vowed, ere the ship righted from her terrific lurch, that if once we put foot again safe and sound on the mainland of Scotland, no sporting or wandering tastes should ever induce us to take passage in a northern steamer.

We had yet, however, some days to try our patience; for, ere we had gained the smooth water 'mid the Isles of Orkney, it was found that we had split the main shaft of the vessel fore and aft; and that the wind having died away at the very identical moment we most required its services, we might perhaps, as the engines had become useless, the tides particularly adverse, and scarcely a breath of air to fill the sails, have managed to run straight on the stupendous rocks with which on all sides we were surrounded; and, had such been the case, the morning papers would have secured the pleasure of conveying the intelligence to our friends, that a large steamer of 250 horse power having driven ashore in a gale on one of the Orkney Isles (although it was a dead calm), every soul perished. However, a merciful Providence, on this occasion, decided otherwise; and, after rolling here and rolling there, a friendly puff carried us round a formidable rock, instead of on it; and, with a delight which few can conceive but those who have been placed in a similar situation, we heard the anchor drop, and found ourselves in safety.

The fact of being there, in the calm waters of a small bay amid the Orkney Isles, and getting to Aberdeen, or even to Wick, with no shaft on which to revolve our paddles, was another question. A council of war, or rather of peace, was therefore held; and as fortunately we had a gallant and intelligent naval officer on board, who suggested many practical plans for splicing even a steamer's shaft, a boat was dispatched on shore, and messengers were sent across the island to Kirkwall for all the blacksmiths and all the iron in the town. All the blacksmiths and all the iron, however, that could be obtained, were only, the one capable, the other sufficient, to make four sort of rings by which to bind

our broken limb, by two days' hard labour; ad interim, we had no alternative but that of shooting puffins and catching codlins, diversified by eating breakfast, lunch, dinner, tea, supper, washed down with beer, porter, brandy, champagne, port, claret, and sherry. At last, however, the welcome sound of the puffing steam greeted our ears once more, and we were fairly under way again; we had, however, scarcely weathered the island, ere crack went the handywork of the Orkney smith. On this occasion. however, the wind proved fair, every sail was hoisted, and we made headway sufficient for safety. The naval officer then proposed that a chain should be strongly bound round the shaft; this was successfully managed, and good fortune and a fair night enabled us to make the harbour of Wick, where, taking the mail for the south, we recorded the vow already made, never again to seek pleasure on the Shetland seas.

With this determination, we bade them farewell, as did we our travelling companion, who was once more greeted with the presence of his faithful servant, who, like his master, had been acting a comedy of errors—imprimis by allowing him to go on board alone, with the full idea that he would call for him at the inn as he passed for embarkation; and, secondly, by making two vain attempts to cross the Pentland Frith and catch the steamer at Kirkwall, by which he lost a second chance of a passage to Shetland.

THE END.

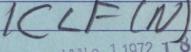


14 DAY USE RETURN TO DESK FROM WHICH BORROWED

LOAN DEPT.

This book is due on the last date stamped below, or on the date to which renewed. Renewals only:
Tel. No. 642-3405

Renewals may be made 4 days prior to date due. Renewed books are subject to immediate recall.



JAN 2 1 1972 1

REC'D LD JAN 1 8'72 -7 PM 8 4'

MAR 9 1981

NOV 1 4 1988

AUTO DISCJAN 24 '89

M312881

U.C. BERKELEY LIBRARIES



C006715182

